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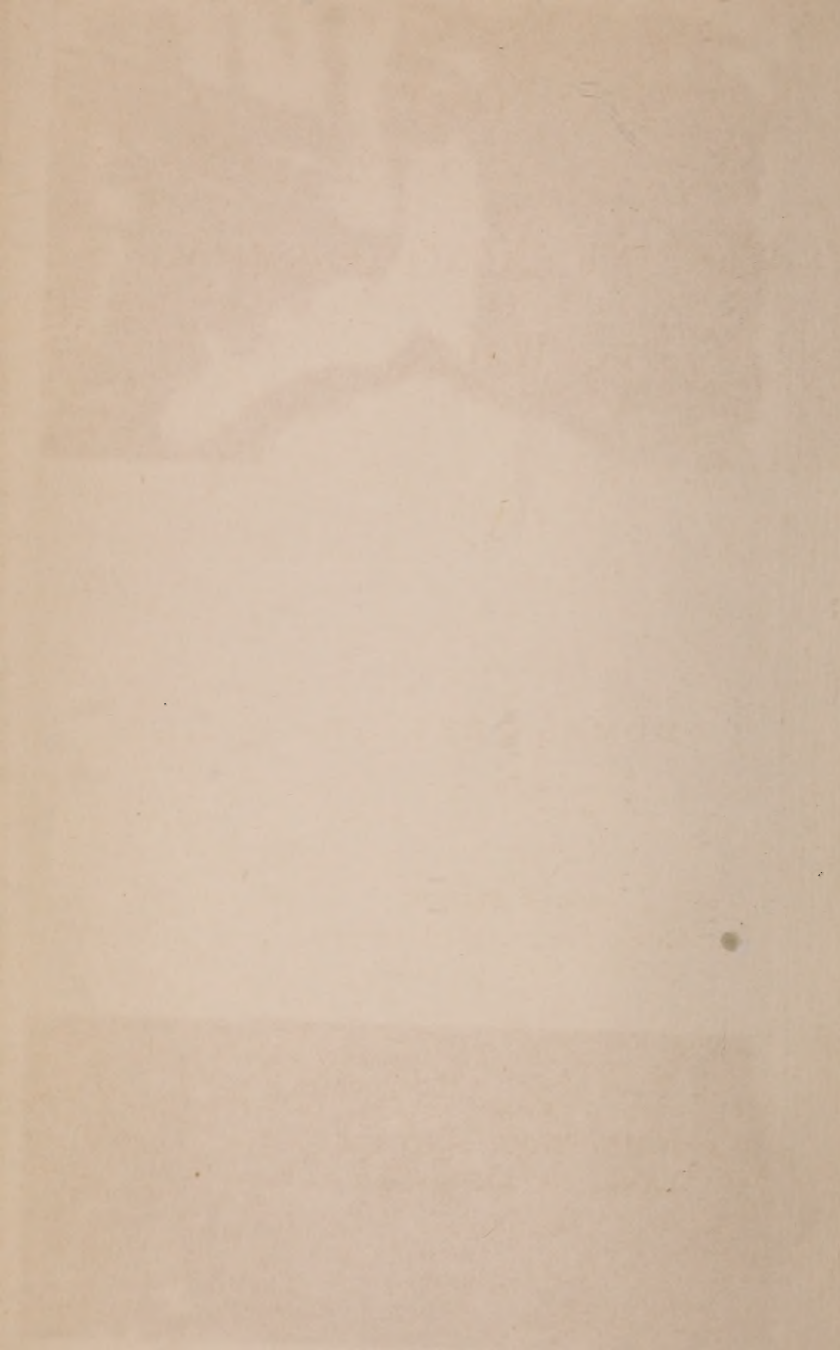
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History of Protestant
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HISTORY
OF
PROTESTANT NONCONFORMITY
IN WALES,

*FROM ITS RISE IN 1633 TO THE PRESENT
TIME.*

BY
THOMAS REES, D.D.

SECOND EDITION,
REVISED AND CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED.

London:
JOHN SNOW AND CO.,
IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXXXIII.

1883
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DEDICATION.

TO THE REVERENDS

E. HERBER EVANS, Congregational Minister, Caernarvon ;
DAVID SAUNDERS, Calvinistic Methodist Minister, Swansea ;
A. JONES PARRY, Baptist Minister, Swansea ;
and
DAVID EVANS (Degar), Wesleyan Minister, Swansea.

Beloved Brethren,

I dedicate this Edition of the
HISTORY OF PROTESTANT NONCONFORMITY IN WALES,
the result of my researches for forty years,

TO YOU,

both as representative Ministers in your respective denominations,
and also
as forming by age and service a bond of union between the elder and the
younger generations of Welsh Nonconformist Ministers,

With earnest Prayer

that your valuable lives may be long spared to advance the good work
commenced two hundred and fifty years ago by the worthy

FATHERS OF WELSH NONCONFORMITY,

and carried on in subsequent ages by a succession of able, faithful, and
self-denying men ;

and to urge and encourage your younger brethren to cling tenaciously to
the principles and the evangelical views of their illustrious Forefathers,
so that the Religion which has proved such an inestimable blessing
to the Welsh nation may still flourish more and more,
until all the inhabitants of our country become the
devoted followers of the Lord Jesus.

I am, beloved Brethren,

Your fellow servant in Christ,

THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first Edition of this work was published in the year 1861, and two thousand copies of it were sold in a very short time. Subsequent Episcopal and Dissenting historians have repeatedly referred to it as an authority. During the last twenty-one years the Author discovered several manuscripts in the Record Office, the British Museum, &c., throwing additional light on the history of religion in the Principality. These valuable documents were carefully copied, and are incorporated in the present edition, so that it contains nearly one-fifth more matter than the first.

In revising the work for this edition, all errors which the Author himself discovered, and those pointed out to him by others, have been corrected. It has been his careful aim, in composing and revising the work, to avoid writing any sentence calculated to wound the feelings of any one; but he has not quite succeeded. His remarks on the improper behaviour of some of the founders of the Society of Friends in Wales greatly irritated his good friend, the late Mr. Jonathan Rees, of Neath, and his statement regarding the state of religion in Wales previous to the rise of Methodism has somewhat displeased his valued friend and fellow-townsmen, the Rev. W. Williams. Though the good men who founded all the denominations were imperfect, and some of them narrow-minded and imprudent, yet we should not on that account regard them

as "base" characters, and say that their history was not worthy to be written. They were good, godly, and valuable men, notwithstanding their petty prejudices and imperfections.

Mr. Williams's statement that numbers of the Nonconformists of Wales were Unitarians before the beginning of the Methodist Revival is incorrect. There were no avowed Unitarians in Wales until the close of the last century. There were a few Arminians among the Nonconformists nine or ten years before the breaking out of the great Revival, and that Arminianism, or rather Pelagianism, gradually developed into Arianism, and ultimately into Unitarianism, but not till after the lapse of forty or fifty years subsequent to the rise of Methodism.

The Author begs to express his warmest thanks to the friends who have rendered him assistance in various ways, and especially to his highly esteemed brother, the Rev. John Rees, of Rodborough, Gloucestershire, who has kindly consented to undertake the tedious task of preparing the copious index appended to the volume.

This record of the labours, the sufferings, the fidelity to their principles and convictions, and the successes of the good men to whom, under God, Wales is indebted for all the privileges and liberty which it enjoys in this age, should inspire us all with unwavering determination to tread in the footsteps of those worthies. That such may be the case is the hope and the prayer of the Author.

SWANSEA, *March* 31, 1883.



PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE history of Nonconformity in Wales has hitherto been comparatively unknown to English readers. There is not, among the endless variety of works, on almost every conceivable subject, with which English literature abounds, a single volume on the rise and progress of Nonconformity in the Principality. To supply that defect is the design of the present work.

The public is to decide how worthy of his subject the Author has accomplished his task. The time, the labour, and the expense of collecting and arranging the materials have been so enormous, to a person in his circumstances, that, had he foreseen them, it is doubtful whether he could have mustered courage to undertake the work. However, he has now the satisfaction of offering to the public the fruit of hard and expensive labour, and not what has cost him nothing.

It has been the Author's aim throughout to give a fair statement of facts, and to leave those facts to speak for themselves, without interspersing among them long dissertations of his own. Firmly attached as he is to his own creed, he has written this volume under the impression that it is not within the province of an historian to criticise the creeds of other people. If he has written any sentence which may give a just cause of offence to any party, he can assure his readers that he

did it unintentionally ; but should the *facts* which he has put together offend any one, he is not to be held responsible for that.

While the Author fearlessly offers his statement of facts to the severest criticism, he must throw himself on the mercy of his critics in regard to the *style* of the composition. He has written the volume amidst the numerous and anxious cares of a large pastoral charge, and the repeated calls of public movements connected with the denomination to which he has the honour to belong. He may also be permitted to state, that all his knowledge of the English language has been acquired after the twentieth year of his age, without the assistance of any tutor. He therefore ventures to indulge the hope, should these facts be taken into consideration, that no *honourable* reader or reviewer will criticise his style with much severity.

The Author begs to express his gratitude and obligations to a large number of gentlemen and friends, for the loan of rare manuscripts and printed books, and assistance rendered in various other ways. The Revs. John Griffiths, A.M., and Dr. Joseph Romilly, keepers of the Archives at Oxford and Cambridge, have promptly replied to his repeated inquiries, and favoured him with valuable extracts from the registers of the Universities, by which he has been enabled to give the ages, birth-places, &c., of several of the founders of Welsh Nonconformity. The Revs. D. Charles, B.A., president of Trevecca College ; J. Morris and W. Roberts, of Brecon College ; W. Thomas, of Bwlchnewydd ; W. Roberts, of Blaenau ; J. Emlyn Jones, A. M. R. Ellis, of Sirhowy ; W. Rowlands, Wesleyan minister ; Dr. Morton Brown, of Cheltenham ; Dr. Waddington, of London ; George Lewis, of Blackwood ; B. Hanbury, Esq., Joseph Joseph, Esq., F.S.A., of Brecon ; Joshua Wilson, Esq., Henry Rutt, Esq., of London ; Mrs. Brown, of Liverpool, &c., have materially assisted him. But he wishes to refer particularly to his excellent countryman, Walter D. Jeremy, Esq., A.M., of London, who kindly assisted him to find out a vast number of old manuscripts, to which he had access, at Redcross Street Library, and elsewhere. Mr. Knyvett, of Lambeth Palace, Mr. Cogan, of Redcross Street Library, and the attend-

ants at the British Museum, and other public libraries, have also been very obliging.

Should this humble production be in some measure the means of promoting the cause of religion and religious liberty, the Author will be amply rewarded for his labour.

BEAUFORT, MONMOUTHSHIRE,

May 1, 1861.



BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

ON

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CONTENTS.



INTRODUCTION.

	PAGE
Containing a Sketch of the Religious State of the Principality, from the Reformation to the rise of Nonconformity	I

CHAPTER I.

History of Nonconformity, from its rise, A.D. 1633, to the Commencement of the Civil Wars, A.D. 1642	34
--	----

CHAPTER II.

From the Commencement of the Civil Wars to the Act of Uniformity, A.D. 1642—1662	64
--	----

CHAPTER III.

From the Act of Uniformity to the Revolution, A.D. 1662—1688	121
--	-----

CHAPTER IV.

From the Revolution to the rise of Calvinistic Methodism, A.D. 1688—1735	243
--	-----

CHAPTER V.

From the rise of Calvinistic Methodism to the close of the Eighteenth Century, A.D. 1735—1800	312
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

From A.D. 1801 to 1861	PAGE 418
----------------------------------	-------------

CHAPTER VII.

From A.D. 1861 to 1882	454
----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

Historical Sketch of the Colleges of the Welsh Nonconformists, from A.D. 1662 to the present time	493
--	-----

APPENDIX	509
--------------------	-----

INDEX	517
-----------------	-----





PROTESTANT NONCONFORMITY IN WALES.

INTRODUCTION.

Interesting Character of the Subject—Moral and Religious State of the Welsh Nation from the Year 1534 to the Rise of Nonconformity—The Degraded Character and Negligence of the Clergy—Consequent Moral Degradation of the People—The Translation of the Bible—Lives and Labours of Sir John Price, W. Salesbury, Bishops Davies, Morgan, and Parry, John Penry, Rees Prichard—The Founders of Nonconformity.



THE History of Protestant Nonconformity in the Principality of Wales is a subject so full of general interest that its study cannot fail to be instructive to the Christian, the Patriot, and the Politician. A movement, commenced by a few persecuted clergymen of the Established Church, which in the course of two centuries resulted in the elevation of the Welsh from the depths of moral degradation, ignorance, and superstition, to the highest rank amongst the enlightened Protestant nations of the world, not only without the aid and countenance of the State and the upper class, but under their frowns and against their most bitter and hostile opposition, to say the least, deserves the thoughtful consideration of all thinking men, whatever their religious or political opinions may be.

In order to understand the circumstances in which Welsh Nonconformity originated, it is necessary to glance at the

moral and religious condition of the Principality, from the dawn of the Reformation to the time when the first Nonconformist church was formed, and at the lives and labours of the few worthies who endeavoured to enlighten our benighted forefathers during that period.

There were in England, early in the sixteenth century, considerable numbers of pious and learned men, who sympathized with the views and movements of Luther and the other continental Reformers. When Henry VIII. quarrelled with the Pope in the year 1534, they availed themselves of that circumstance to promote the Reformation in this country. During the short and happy reign of Edward VI. it progressed rapidly ; but, unhappily, Wales was all the time lying unmoved in the iron chains of Popery, and the most disgusting immorality, as the following statement of an impartial historian proves : " Anno 1550. As to the success of the Reformation, it went on but slowly in the parts farther distant from London. In Wales the people ordinarily carried their beads about with them to church and used them in prayer. And even at the church at Caermarthen, while the Bishop was at the communion table bare-headed doing his devotions, the people kneeled there and knocked their breasts at the sight of the communion, using the same superstitious ceremonies as they had used in times past before the mass. They brought their corpses to be buried with songs and candles lighted up about them. And one Dr. Hughes ministering the communion in the cathedral church of St. David's did, after the popish manner, break the host into three pieces, putting one of the parts into the cup and giving a whole cake to the communicants without breaking the same. Also this country was very infamous for concubinage, adultery, and incest. Some kept four concubines together. It was common for married men to keep concubines. One had two children by his own sister. One kept two sisters, whereof one was married to another man. One kept his own sister. And many of these sinners were priests."¹

The only attempts made at this time to enlighten Wales, as

¹ Strype's " Ecclesiastical Memorials," vol. ii. p. 357. Ed. 1822.

far as we know, were the publication of a small book by Sir John Price, of Brecon, in the year 1546, containing a translation of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed; and a translation by William Salesbury of the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Epistles, as appointed to be read in the churches at the celebration of the Communion, and on Sundays and fast days, published in the year 1551. These were the first books printed in the Welsh language, and our nation is indebted to two pious laymen for them. "This, little and inconsiderable as it may be thought, seems to have been all the effect the Reformation had in this way on that part of the kingdom, till the reign of Queen Elizabeth; but that promised and produced something more considerable."¹

To "the noble army of martyrs" in the reign of Queen Mary, Wales only furnished three, and they were Englishmen; viz., Bishop Farrar, at Caermarthen; Rawlins White, a fisherman, at Cardiff; and William Nicol, a simple but pious man, at Haverfordwest. It is probable that there were a few Anglicized Welshmen amongst those who suffered martyrdom in England in this reign, and that there were two or three from Wales amongst the exiles who fled to the continent, and returned to their native country on the accession of Elizabeth. But the mass of the nation, both priests and people, were decided Papists; and the very small number who had imbibed Protestant principles were by no means men of such energy of character, brilliancy of talent, and elevated piety, as the state of the nation, and the circumstances of the age, required. In vain we search the history of the Reformation for a Welsh Cranmer, Latimer, or Knox. The Welsh priests, who, on the accession of Mary, renounced their nominal Protestantism, again, as a body, on the accession of Elizabeth, renounced their Popery, with the exception of three of the four bishops, and two or three other dignitaries. A nation consigned to the care of such unprincipled teachers could not have been expected to make any progress in either religion or morality.

¹ Dr. Llewelyn's "Historical Account of the Welsh Versions and Editions of the Bible," p. 4. 1768.

Dr. Rowland Meyrick, Bishop of Bangor in the year 1560, addressed the following inquiries to the clergy of his diocese :

"1. Whether they and every one of them have preached in their Cures according to the order prescribed in the third and fourth articles of the Queen's injunctions.

"2. Whether they and every one of them have the New Testament in English and in Latin (and the paraphrase of Erasmus upon the same) of their own, and to their own several proper use.

"3. How many chapters of the New Testament in English or in Latin have they and every one of them conned and laboured by heart since the Queen's visitation; and let them and every one of them be examined in that behalf.

"4. How many of them be resident and keep houses, and where doth the absent remain.

"5. How many of them be *concubinearies*, or be suspected for such, by means of receiving of suspicious women to their houses; and how many of them are notoriously known to be married.

"6. Whether the parsons and vicars do serve their own Cures or else they have curates, and what be the names of such curates." ¹

The fact that such inquiries were made is a sufficient proof of the reputed ignorance and the immorality of the professed religious teachers of the people. No wonder that Dr. Meyrick complained that he had only two preachers in all his diocese. It does not appear that the state of the other dioceses was anything better.

The following extract from Strype gives us a sad view of the state of morality amongst the Welsh clergy at this time: "In the latter end of this year, 1565, to wit, in February, resolution was taken for the speedy supplying of two Welsh bishoprics; viz., that of Llandaff and that of Bangor; the former of which had been two or three years, in effect, void, and wanted a vigilant bishop to manage that diocese; which, therefore, the archbishop, in the year 1563, had earnestly put the secretary

¹ The "*Archæologia Cambrensis*," 3rd series, vol. ix. p. 281. Neal's "*History of the Puritans*," vol. i. p. 135. Ed. 1823.

in mind of. But the great dilapidations had so impoverished that see, that few that were honest and able would be persuaded to meddle with it. As for Bangor, that diocese was also much out of order, there being no preaching used, and pensionary concubinage openly continued ; which was allowance of concubines to the clergy by paying a pension, notwithstanding the liberty of marriage granted. And the archbishop was at that time earnestly solicited to have such a commissioner there as kept openly three concubines, as men of good reputation offered to prove before him. Things, in fine, were in such disorder here, that our archbishop was desired, by some well affected of that country, to have a visitation, and to set such order there as whosoever should come to the bishopric should be forced to prosecute it. And accordingly a visitation was instituted the next year, by the archbishop's commission to Dr. Yale, which did great good, as he that was afterwards bishop there wrote him word. So that Wales being in an evil condition as to religion, the inhabitants remaining still greatly ignorant and superstitious, the Queen left it particularly to the care of the archbishop to recommend fit persons for those two sees now to be disposed of." ¹

If it was natural to expect that the number of able Protestant ministers would have been but small for some years after the sudden enforcement of Protestantism by an Act of Parliament upon a popish nation, yet an improvement might have been reasonably expected in course of time ; but history proves the contrary. Dr. William Hughes, Bishop of St. Asaph, was accused, in the year 1587, of misgoverning his diocese, and of tolerating the most disgraceful abuses. When the case was inquired into, it was found that the bishop himself held sixteen rich livings in *commendam* ; that most of the great livings were in the possession of persons who lived out of the country ; that one person, that had two of the greatest livings in the diocese, boarded in an ale-house ; and that only three preachers resided upon their livings ; viz., Dr. David Powell, of Ruabon, Dr. William Morgan, of Llanrhaiadr-yn-Mochnant, and the parson

¹ Strype's " Life of Archbishop Parker," vol. i. pp. 404-5. Ed. 1821.

of Llanvechan, an aged man about eighty years old.¹ The testimony of our pious, earnest, and martyred countryman, John Penry, fully confirms these glaring facts. "Wales is said to be in a tolerable condition, for it hath many preachers of a long time. The more the shame, then, for them that it hath no more teaching. This I dare affirm and stand to, that if a view of all the registries in Wales be taken, the name of that shire, that town, or of that parish, cannot be found, where, for the space of six years together, within these twenty-nine years, a godly and learned minister hath executed the duty of a faithful teacher, and approved his ministry in any mean sort. And what, then, should you tell me of abbey lubbers, who take no pains, though they be able? If I utter an untruth, let me be reprov'd, and suffer as a slanderer; if a truth, why shall I not be allowed? I know very well that to speak anything at all in these days against clergymen is to speak in Bethel with poor Amos to prophesy in the king's court, and so to be busy in matters of state. Miserable days! Into what times are we fallen, that thieves and murderers of souls, the very patterns and patrons of all covetousness, proud and more than Pope-like tyrants, the very defeaters of God's truth, unlearned dolts, blind guides, unseasoned and unsavoury salt, drunkards, adulterers, foxes and wolves, mire and puddle, to be brief, the very swinesty of all uncleanness, and the very ignominy and reproach of the sacred ministry, cannot be spoken against, but this will be straightways made a matter against the state. And therefore all the misery, all the ignorance, all the profaneness in life and conversation, hath been, for the most part, by means of our bishops and our other blind guides; yet may not a man affirm so much with any safety, lest he be said to be a mutinous and factious fellow, and one that troubleth the state.

"For mine own part, therefore, the prophet Malachi shall deal with you; and let the reader consider whether his words ought not, in a fearful sort, to strike and astonish you. A son (saith the prophet) honoureth his father, and a servant his

¹ Strype's "Annals of the Reformation," vol. iv. pp. 293-4; and Appendix to vol. iv. p. 63. Ed. 1725.

master : if, then, I be a father, where is mine honour? if a master, where is my fear? saith Jehovah of hosts unto you, O ye bishops of Wales, that despise His name. If you say, Wherein have we despised Him? it will be answered, that you offer the blind and the maimed unto the holy ministry, and say it is no evil, and so despise the Lord's name, because you say the Lord's ministry is not to be regarded. For seeing you yourselves know, and all Wales knoweth, that you have admitted unto this sacred function rogues, vagabonds, gadding about the country under the name of scholars; spendthrifts, and starving men, that made the ministry their last refuge;—seeing you permit such to be in the ministry as are known adulterers, known thieves, roisterers, most abominable swearers, even the men of whom Job speaketh, who are more vile than the earth, do you not say that the Lord's service is not to be regarded? If you do any longer either tolerate others or continue yourselves to be thievish non-residents, and starve the souls of poor innocents, do you regard the Lord's honour and the salvation of His people? Is the law of truth found in your mouths? Do ye convert any from iniquity? It should be so, indeed; for your lips should preserve knowledge, and the ignorant should seek the law at your mouths, for you ought to be the messengers of Jehovah of hosts. But may this testimony be given of you? I fear me no. Nay, rather, because all the world seeth that judgment upon you which the prophet denounced against the prelates of his days, namely, that you are vile and contemptible in the sight of the people (for what is more contemptible among the best and basest of our people than to be a priest, yea, a priestly lord bishop?) I can judge no otherwise of you, but that you have not kept the ways of Jehovah—gone out of the way, caused many to fall by the law, and corrupted the covenant of Levi. And will you still continue in these transgressions? God forbid! Be awakened, then, now at the length, considering whereunto you are called. Undergo that calling no longer which you are not able to discharge. I speak unto you all, even unto you that will be accounted lord bishops, though it be to the Lord's dishonour. Let the curse of damned souls cleave no longer unto you, for

it pierceth deeply. You are one day to give a reckoning for your merciless dealing with poor souls.”¹

The celebrated Rees Prichard, Vicar of Llandovery, who wrote at least forty years after Penry, and who was a staunch conformist, gives the same character to the Welsh clergy of his days. He says that it were difficult to decide whether the *clergyman*, the farmer, the labourer, the artisan, the bailiff, the judge, or the nobleman was the most daring in impiety.²

In the report of the visitation of Dr. Lewis Baily, Bishop of Bangor, held in July, 1623, we find the following account of the state of things in several parishes of that diocese :

ANGLESEA.

Llanfairpwllgwyngyll and *Llandysilio*. They have had but two sermons here the last twelve months before the visitation, and those by their Rector, Sir John Cadwalader.³

Penmon. No sermon preached there these five or six years last past.

Llanddona. No service read there but every other Sunday, although service every Sunday hath been ordered unto them.

Llanddyfnan. No quarterly sermons.

Llangwyllog. No sermons at all.

Llanfechell. The parson there is presented for not *relieving the poor*, being non-resident, and for want of sermons.

Llanddeusant and *Llanfairynghornaeu*. The curate here is presented for not reading service in due time, and for not reading of homilies, and for not registering christenings, weddings, and burials. They had but three sermons here since last Whitsuntide twelvemonth. The said curate is presented for haunting of ale-houses, and for being often overseen in drink. Also for omitting to read the Litany most commonly, and also for brawling and quarrelling with his parishioners and others.

Llanfwrog and *Llanfaethlu*. But two sermons here these twelve months.

¹ “An Exhortation unto the People and Governors of her Majesty’s Country of Wales,” pp. 31, &c. 1588.

² See the second poem in the “Welshman’s Candle.”

³ *Sir* was formerly prefixed to the names of the clergy, as *Reverend* is now.

CAERNARVONSHIRE.

Llandegai. Sir David Morgan, curate there, doth not dwell in that parish.

Llanllechid. The churchwardens and sidesmen there do present that the churchyard is defiled by Dr. Williams's horses, and that they had but three sermons the last year.

Caerhun. They had but three sermons here within the last twelve months, and they very seldom have homilies, and they have been upon one Sunday within this twelve months without service.

Llanbedr-y-cennin. They have not had more than two or three sermons here this last twelve months.

Dolwyddelen. No sermons.

Dirwygfylchi. Sir Edward Jones, vicar here, presented for making hay and corn in the churchyard. Also for putting his saddle and hives of bees in the church to be kept. Also there was no communion here last Easter.

Aberdaron. Sir Griffith Piers, vicar, is presented. A dead child of Hugh Thomas laid unburied from Saturday to Sunday, for that vicar could not be found to bury the same. Also that the said vicar came to read prayers upon a Sunday and was not well, but seemed to be overseen by drink, and after the evening prayer went to the ale-house. Also that the said vicar being warned upon Saturday to come and bury one upon Sunday, did not come at all, neither to bury the dead body nor to read service here that day.

Llangian. Sir Robert Griffith, curate, is presented for not ministering the communion to the sick, being requested ; and also for leaving dead corpses unburied, and for not christening sickly children, leaving them to die unchristened. No quarterly sermons.

Llanbeblig. No quarterly sermons.

MERIONETHSHIRE.

Llandecwyn and *Llanfihangel-y-traethau.* They had but one sermon at Llanfihangel, and only two or three at Llandecwyn.

Llanegryn. But two sermons there.

Pennal and *Towyn.* They have but seldom sermons here.

Trawsfynydd. It is usual there to lay down dead corpses at crossways, and to say a prayer or two.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

Llanwnnog. No sermons in this church.

The foregoing extracts were copied from a much-damaged manuscript of the Rev. J. Jones, Vicar of Llanllyfni. The returns are very incomplete, owing to the decayed condition of the original document, but meagre as they are, they are sufficient to show what was the general character of the Welsh clergy in 1623.¹

On the 26th of June, 1641, a petition, signed by Walter Cradock and many other credible persons in Wales, was presented to the Parliament, in which it is stated that there were found, upon strict inquiry, scarcely as many conscientious and constant preachers in Wales as were of counties, and that those, too, were silenced or much persecuted.²

The testimony of several other contemporary writers to the same effect might be adduced. In the list of the clergy deprived of their livings in Wales, from the year 1642 to 1658, by the agents of the Parliamentary Committee for Scandalous Ministers, and the Commissioners under the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, we find not a few ejected for non-residency, inefficiency, drunkenness, adultery, and similar crimes.³

With a clergy of such reprobate character we do not wonder to find the people described as sunk in ignorance, superstition, and the grossest immoralities. In the preamble of an Act passed in the year 1563, to authorize the translation of the Bible into the Welsh language, it is stated that "her Majesty's most loving and obedient subjects, inhabiting within her Highness's dominion and country of Wales, being no small part of this realm, are utterly destitute of God's Holy Word, and do remain in the like, or *rather more* darkness and ignorance, than they were in the time of Papistry."

¹ "Archæologia Cambrensis," Third Series, vol. ix. p. 283.

² Powell's "Bird in the Cage." Ed. 1662.

³ Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," part ii. 1714.

Dr. Richard Davies, Bishop of St. David's, in his letter prefixed to the first translation of the New Testament, printed in the year 1567, gives the following description of the moral state of the Welsh nation at that time: "Look at the fashion of the world: there thou shalt have a temptation. Such is the greediness of the world this day for land, gold, silver, and riches, that but few are to be found who trust in God and His promises. By rapine and theft, perjury, deceit, falsehood, and arrogance, as with hooks, men of all sorts gather and draw to themselves. God will not drown the world again with the waters of a deluge; but lust for the things of this world has drowned Wales at this day, and has driven away everything good and virtuous. For what is office in Wales in the present age but a hook, with which he who holds it draws to himself the fleece and the flesh of his neighbour? What are learning, knowledge, and skill in the law, but thorns in the sides of neighbours, to cause them to stand aloof? Often, in Wales, the hall of the gentleman is found to be the refuge of thieves. . . . Therefore I say that were it not for the arms and the wings of the gentry, there would be but little theft in Wales."

The works of John Penry, published in the years 1587—1593, abound with the most heartrending descriptions of the moral degradation, ignorance, and spiritual destitution of our forefathers. He says that the people knew scarcely anything of Jesus Christ; that their ideas of God the Father, of the Holy Scriptures, and a future state were extremely grovelling and degrading; and that nothing but superstition of the most drivelling nature kept the mass of the population from a blank and cheerless atheism. No one ever attempted to contradict the statements of the martyr, but they are fully confirmed by the testimony of a host of credible witnesses in the succeeding age. The Bishop of St. Asaph, in the account of his diocese, which he sent to Archbishop Laud in the year 1633, says that all was exceedingly well, save only that the number and boldness of some Romish recusants increased much in many places, and was much encouraged by the superstition and frequent concourse of some of that party to Holywell, otherwise called St.

Winifred's Well. Whether the concourse was by way of pilgrimage or no he knew not, but he was sure that it had long been complained of without remedy. Again, in the following year, he writes that they were not anywhere troubled with Inconformity, but that he heartily wished that they might be as well acquitted from superstition and profaneness.¹

The celebrated vicar of Llandovery, whose ministry commenced in the year 1602 and closed in the year 1644, states that not one in a hundred of his countrymen could read the Bible ; that no copy of the Word of God was to be found, even in the mansions of many of the gentry ; that the clergy were sleeping, leaving the people to sin unwarned and unrebuked ; that the upper class, with rare exceptions, were totally regardless of religion, and the common people ignorant, and unwilling to receive instruction ; and that the unchastity of the Sodomites, the drunkenness of the Parthians, the theft of the Cretians, the falsehood of the Greeks, and the infidelity of the Samaritans, were rampant throughout every part of the Principality.²

On the 27th page of a pamphlet written in the year 1646, by John Lewis, Esq., of Glasgrug, in Cardiganshire, entitled "Contemplation on these Times, or the Parliament explained to Wales," we have the following statement: "In brief, countryman, I must tell you we are deceived, and do not know our own condition. We will needs be accounted good Protestants, when, alas ! how can that be, when we want means to become so ? To say a perfunctory reading of the *Common Prayer* can make us so is to say it can do miracles. A wretched sermon now and then, and that either by an ignorant or scandalous minister, or both, alas ! what can it do ? it being commonly, too, such stuff, you know not whether it savours stronger of the *ale* or the *pocket*. In many places not a sermon is scarce to be had once a year. *Half an hour's shower in a great drought will little avail the chapped earth*. I must tell you, abating gentry and a few others, that by the benefit of education may

¹ The Lambeth MSS. Vol. 943.

² See the first two poems in the "Welshman's Candle," and several other portions of that valuable book, especially the poem called "A Warning to Wales to Repent."

be otherwise, generally, I dare boldly say, we can be but Papists or worse in Wales. I need not remind you of that swarm of *blind, superstitious ceremonies* that are among us, passing under the name of *old harmless customs*; *their frequent calling upon saints in their prayers and blessings*; *their peregrinations to wells and chapels*. Mistake me not, that I delight to discover the blemishes of my country: it argues good will to tell one's malady before a physician. Not I first, but our own learned countryman, Dr. Powell, doth in books bewail us for these miseries."

The culpable carelessness and apathy of the Welsh bishops and clergy of the sixteenth century, and the lamentable spiritual destitution of the nation, are further evinced by the fact that the Word of God was withheld from the body of the people for nearly a century after the overthrow of Popery. "For upwards of *seventy years* from the settlement of the Reformation by Queen Elizabeth, for near *one hundred years* from Britain's separation from the Church of Rome, there were no *Bibles* in Wales, but only *in the cathedrals or parish churches and chapels*. There was no provision made for the country or for the people in general; as if they had nothing to do with the Word of God, at least no farther than they might hear it in their attendance on public worship once in the week. This is astonishing."¹ It has already been noticed that small portions of the sacred Scriptures were translated and printed in the Welsh language in the years 1546 and 1551. In the year 1563 it was enacted by Parliament,² "That the Bible, consisting of the New Testament and Old, together with the Book of Common Prayer and the administration of the sacraments, should be translated into the British or Welsh tongue; should be viewed, perused, and allowed by the Bishops of St Asaph, Bangor, St. David's, Llandaff, and Hereford; should be printed and used in the churches by the first of March, in the year fifteen hundred and sixty-six, under a penalty, in case of failure, of forty pounds, to be levied on each of the above bishops."

Whatever became of the penalty, the work was neglected. In 1567, a year after the time specified in the Act for the

¹ Dr. Llewelyn's Historical Account, p. 36.

² 5 Elizabeth, cap. 28.

publication of the whole Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, the New Testament, translated by William Salesbury, Esq., with the assistance of Bishop Davies and the Rev. Thomas Huet, was published. After the lapse of twenty-one years from this time (A.D. 1588), the learned and pious Dr. William Morgan, vicar of Llanrhaiadr-yn-Mochnant, in Denbighshire, presented his countrymen with a translation of the Old Testament, and a revised edition of Salesbury's translation of the New. Dr. Llewelyn endeavours to excuse the non-compliance of the five bishops with the requirements of the Act, alleging that the time allowed for the work was not sufficient, and that the statute did not provide funds to meet the expense: but Dr. Morgan, in his dedication to the Queen of his translation of the Bible, ascribes the delay to carelessness and idleness; and the seraphic John Penry, who seems to have translated the Minor Prophets, when his labour of love was arrested by the persecuting prelates, says that "one man seen in the original, by the blessing of God, would be able to translate the whole in two years: more hands would make more speed."¹

The edition of Dr. Morgan's Bible was scarcely sufficient to furnish every church and chapel in the Principality with a copy. To supply families with copies was quite out of the question. When this edition was nearly worn out in the churches, Dr. Richard Parry, Bishop of St. Asaph, in the year 1620, published a revised edition, again merely for the use of the churches. It was not till the year 1630 that a portable edition of the sacred volume was published for the use of the people. Our forefathers were indebted for this boon to two pious and benevolent Welshmen, then Aldermen of the City of London—Rowland Heylin, Esq., and Sir Thomas Middleton. We are not informed how many copies of this first people's edition of the Welsh Bible were printed. It is supposed that they did not exceed 1,500—less than two copies for every parish. From this time to the close of the seventeenth century several octavo editions were printed.²

¹ Penry's "Equity of an Humble Supplication," p. 57. 1587.

² Appendix, A.

Amidst the Egyptian darkness in which our nation was enveloped, from the days of Henry VIII. to those of Charles I., it relieves one's mind to meet with the names of a *small number* of worthy individuals who consecrated their learning, talents, and time to promote the spiritual amelioration of their countrymen. Gratitude and patriotism demand that their names should be transmitted with reverence to posterity. If they were inferior to their contemporaries, the English and Scotch reformers, in energy of character and extent of service to the cause of evangelical Protestantism, still their memories must ever be dear to every pious and patriotic Welshman. Short biographical notices of these worthies shall take up the remaining portion of this Introduction.

Sir JOHN PRICE, LL.D., was the son of Rhys ab Gwilym Gwyn, a gentleman of high standing in Breconshire. He was educated at Oxford. Having taken his degrees at the University, he was called to the bar, and soon attracted the notice of King Henry VIII. He married Joan Williams, a niece of Morgan Williams, of Whitchurch, the ancestor of Oliver Cromwell, the Protector. During the whole of the reign of Henry VIII. he was a great favourite at court, and on the dissolution of the monasteries he was appointed one of the commissioners for their suppression, and to seize their property for the use of the Crown. This duty for the county of Brecon fell to the lot of Sir John Price. Of his religious character nothing is known ; but as the translator of the first portion of the Word of God which was printed in the Welsh language, his name should not be omitted in a history of religion in the Principality. His translation of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed, as has already been noticed, was published in the year 1546.¹

WILLIAM SALESBURY, the father of Welsh religious literature, was the second son of Foulk Salesbury, Esq., of Plasisaf, Llanrwst, in Denbighshire. He was born early in the sixteenth century, and completed his education at Oxford, where he remained some years. In the preface to his work on Rhetoric, published after his death by Henry Perry, it is stated that he

¹ Jones's "History of Breconshire," vol. ii. pp. 111—114. 1805.

was master of nine languages, besides Welsh and English, viz., Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish. He published several works, such as an English-Welsh Dictionary, 1547; "A brief and plain Introduction, teaching how to pronounce the Letters in the British Tongue," 1550; a translation of the Epistles and Gospels for the whole year, 1551; a translation of the Book of Common Prayer and the administration of the sacraments, 1567; but the work which has immortalized his name is his translation of the New Testament, published in the year 1567. His style is very stiff, clumsy, and unintelligible, owing, undoubtedly, to the eccentric cast of his mind rather than to his want of learning. During the reign of Queen Mary he resided at a place called Caedu, in the parish of Llansanan, in Denbighshire. His zeal, and literary services to the cause of Protestantism, exposed him to imminent dangers in that bloody reign. For his safety he had in his house a small chamber, curiously contrived, accessible only by climbing inside the chimney. After the publication of the New Testament, Salesbury was engaged on a translation of the Old, and had resided nearly two years at Abergwili, with Bishop Richard Davies, for that object, when, unhappily, they disagreed respecting the meaning and etymology of one word. The one would not give way to the other; they consequently parted, and the work was left unfinished. From this time we have no further account of Salesbury. The time and place of his death are unknown, but his name still lives in the affections of his countrymen, and it will live as long as the Welsh language.¹

Dr. RICHARD DAVIES was the son of David ab Gronw, curate of Gyffin, near Conway, Caernarvonshire. He was born in 1501, and received his university education at Oxford. In 1550 he was presented by King Edward VI. to the vicarage of Burnham, and the rectory of Maidsmorton, in Buckinghamshire; but on the accession of Queen Mary he lost his preferments, and was compelled to flee to the continent. He settled at Geneva, where he suffered great poverty, and was dependent for his subsistence for some time on the alms of his fellow-

¹ Williams's "Biographical Dictionary."

exiles. In the course of three years he so mastered the French as to be able to exercise his ministry in that language. He consequently obtained a cure which afforded him a comfortable maintenance. On the death of Queen Mary he returned to this country, and was consecrated Bishop of St. Asaph, January 31 1560. He was translated to the bishopric of St. David's, May 21, 1561, and died at the episcopal palace at Abergwili, November 7, 1581. Dr. Davies was one of the five bishops named in the statute, 5 Eliz. cap. 28, to superintend the translation of the Bible into the Welsh language, and it seems that he was the only one of the five who took any active part in the matter. He assisted Salesbury by translating 1 Timothy, the Hebrews, James, and 1 and 2 Peter. His letter in Welsh, prefixed to the Testament, is one of the finest compositions in the language, and shows that he was a firm Protestant, a warm-hearted patriot, and an accomplished theologian of thoroughly evangelical sentiments. With all his excellences, he was not without his failings. His successor, Bishop Middleton, accuses him of glaring abuses in the management of the temporal affairs of his bishopric, and history is silent respecting any revival of spiritual religion in the diocese during his time.¹

THOMAS HUET was the translator of the book of Revelation for Salesbury's edition of the New Testament. Nothing more is known of this good man than that he was Precentor of St. David's from 1562 to 1588; that he was Rector of Cefnlllys and Disserth, in Radnorshire; that he died August 19, 1591, and was buried at Llanafan, Breconshire.²

To Dr. WILLIAM MORGAN belongs the honour of having presented the Welsh nation with a translation of the whole Bible. This pious benefactor of his country was born at Gwibernant, in the parish of Penmachno, Caernarvonshire. He matriculated at St. John's College, Cambridge, as a sizar, February 16, 1565. He took four degrees at the University, viz., B.A. in January, 1568; M.A. in 1571; B.D. in 1578, and D.D. in 1583. His first preferment was the vicarage of Welshpool, to which he was instituted August 8, 1575. In

¹ Williams's "Biographical Dictionary."

² Jones's "History of Breconshire," vol. ii. p. 241.

1578 he removed to the vicarage of Llanrhaidr-yn-Mochnant, Denbighshire. While at this place he began and completed the laudable work which will make his name dear and familiar to every Christian in Wales as long as the Welsh language is understood. Dr. Morgan was prompted to undertake this most necessary work neither by the Queen, the Parliament, nor the Welsh bishops, but by a pious consideration of the lamentable condition of his benighted countrymen. When it became known to his popish parishioners and others that he was translating the Bible, they laid charges against him, not only before the bishop of the diocese, but also before the Archbishop of Canterbury, alleging, among other things, that he was incompetent for the task he had taken in hand. This malicious proceeding was overruled for good. The persecuted vicar was thus introduced to the primate, who, finding that he was an accomplished scholar, and a perfect master of the Hebrew and Greek languages, encouraged him to proceed with his pious and patriotic undertaking. In 1588 the work was completed, and published in one large folio volume. Dr. Morgan, in his dedication to the Queen, acknowledges his obligations for assistance to the archbishop; Dr. Gabriel Goodman, Dean of Westminster; the Bishops of St. Asaph and Bangor; Dr. David Powell, Vicar of Ruabon; Edmund Prys, Archdeacon of Merioneth, and R. Vaughan, afterwards Bishop of London. Some of these gentlemen rendered him pecuniary assistance, especially the archbishop, and Dean Goodman. The others assisted him by their advice, the loan of books, perusing his manuscripts, &c. It does not appear that any of them actually translated any portion of the sacred books. The doctor himself was the sole translator. His style is smooth, natural, and intelligible. In this respect he greatly excels Salesbury and Bishop Davies. In 1595 Dr. Morgan was deservedly promoted to the see of Llandaff, and in 1601 was translated to St. Asaph, where he died, September 10, 1604. Sir John Wynn, who did not entertain friendly feelings towards the good bishop, is compelled to say of him, "He died a poor man. He was a good scholar, both a Grecian and Hebrician." From all the incidental references to this most excellent person which we

meet in the historians of the period in which he lived, we find that he discharged his duties as a parish clergyman and a bishop with exemplary diligence and conscientiousness. Scarcely any of his contemporaries in Wales resembled him in these respects.¹

Dr. RICHARD PARRY was born at Ruthin, in Denbighshire, in 1560. He was educated at Westminster School, and Christchurch, Oxford. On the death of Dr. Morgan, in 1604, he was consecrated Bishop of St. Asaph, where he remained till the time of his death, which occurred September 26, 1623. Dr. Parry published a revised edition of the Welsh Bible in 1620, and his corrected translation is the present standard version. From the bishop's dedication to King James I., we learn that the spiritual destitution of the nation was most lamentable, and that those whose duty it was to supply the people with religious knowledge were criminally negligent of their duty. He says, "The former impression of the Bible being exhausted, and many, or most of our churches being either without any or having only worn-out and imperfect copies; and nobody, as far as I could learn, *so much as thinking of a republication*; in these circumstances of this matter, and induced by these considerations, I set about revising our translation; and, as had been lately done for England, about providing a supply for the wants of my country, by a new edition of the British Bible, in a better and more correct version." In preparing this "better and more correct version," Dr. Parry was assisted by his learned chaplain, Dr. John Davies.²

Having thus furnished brief sketches of the good men to whom the Welsh nation is indebted for a *translation* of the Word of God, it is proper also that some account should be given of those who excelled as *preachers* of the Word. It does not appear that any of the learned translators of the Welsh Bible, or any of their contemporaries, with the following exceptions, were famous and popular as preachers. If they were, some account would have been transmitted to us of their

¹ "The Traethodydd" for 1852, pp. 27-31. Williams's "Biographical Dictionary."

² Williams's "Biographical Dictionary." Dr. Llewelyn's "Historical Account," p. 30.

usefulness and sufferings as such ; for no popular preacher of that age, if *decidedly evangelical*, escaped persecution, even in England : much less would such a character have escaped in Wales, where the people were much more popish and ignorant.

The first person, since the Reformation, who made any determined effort to evangelize Wales, was the martyred JOHN PENRY. This talented, courageous, and eminently pious man was the son of Meredith Penry, of Cefnbrith, in the parish of Llangamarch, Breconshire. He was born in 1559, and at the age of nineteen entered the University of Cambridge. At that time, like most of his countrymen, he was prejudiced in favour of Popery ; but his intercourse with the Puritans at Cambridge led to his conversion to Protestantism. In 1586 he entered as a student at St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, and soon distinguished himself as "*a famous preacher* in the University."

The leading purpose of his life, ever since his conversion, was to labour and devise plans for the evangelization of his native country. It is probable that he often preached in Wales during his visits to his relatives, when he was a student, and that some of his countrymen were brought to the knowledge of the truth by his instrumentality. In 1587 he published a pamphlet on the spiritual destitution of Wales, which he addressed to the Queen and the Parliament, and in which he urges them to adopt effectual measures for the evangelization of his neglected country. "Thousands of our people," he says, "know Jesus Christ to be neither God nor man—priest nor prophet—almost never heard of Him. O desolate and forlorn condition ! Preaching, itself, in many parts, is quite unknown. In some places, a sermon is read once in three months." Penry traces this sad condition of his countrymen to the fact that the clergy generally were either non-resident, unable to preach, unacquainted with the truths of the gospel, immoral in their lives, or ignorant of the Welsh language. He expresses his strong conviction that nothing but the pure gospel, preached energetically and earnestly in the language of the people, by holy and competent men, could remedy this evil. The plan which he proposed for securing a supply of efficient ministers was to get as many devoted Welsh clergymen as

could be found in England to return to their native country, and to encourage pious *laymen* to exercise their gifts as preachers. A petition, embodying the substance of the pamphlet, was presented to the Parliament by one of the Welsh members, who, in a speech to the House, affirmed the truth of its statements. But the only notice taken of it was the issue of an order for the immediate seizure of the book, and the apprehension of the author. Penry was sent to prison, with a strict order to the jailor to keep him safely. Having been kept in close confinement for a month, he was brought up for examination, or rather, to be bitterly reprimanded. Archbishop Whitgift condemned his plan for the evangelization of Wales as "intolerable," and the idea broached in his book, that no unpreaching clergyman was a true Christian minister, was denounced as an execrable heresy. Our intrepid countryman, undaunted by the threats of the primate, in a calm and impressive tone replied, "I thank God that I ever knew such a heresy, as I will, by the grace of God, sooner leave my life than leave it." The Bishop of Winchester, who was present, said, "I tell thee it is a heresy, and thou shalt recant it as a heresy." "Never!" replied Penry, "God willing, as long as I live." He was remanded for the time, and, after further imprisonment, liberated until his case should assume an aspect that might warrant, in the opinion of his judges, more decisive measures.

Penry was not the man to be deterred from the leading object of his life by persecution, prelatical menaces, and even apparent danger of death. We therefore find him the following year (1588) publishing another pamphlet on the same subject; and this is again followed, in the same year, by a third, entitled, "An Exhortation unto the governors and people of her Majesty's country of Wales to labour earnestly to have the preaching of the gospel planted among them." In this "exhortation" he addresses the unpreaching clergy of Wales in the following forcible, plain, and unflattering language: "I know you, for the most part, to be silly men—poor souls that make a means to live in the world. What should I say unto you, who may say of yourselves, as did the foolish prophets,

Zech. xiii. 5, Though we wear a surplice and black garments to deceive, yet we are but plain husbandmen? Surely the people may ask counsel as well of their thresholds, or desire their staffs to teach them knowledge, as to come unto you for any instruction. You are no ministers, as I have proved, and again will prove. You do most villainously profane the sacraments, and call for the wrath and vengeance of God to be poured upon you. Give over your places, or surely I do not see how it is possible you should be saved. Better were it to live poorly here for a time than to be undone for ever. Is it reason that your outward estates should be considered? The Lord will provide for you, your wives, and children, if, of conscience, you leave the ministry; and the magistrate is bound not to see you in want. You live now upon stealth, sacrilege, and the spoil of souls."

Turning from the "dumb ministers" to the people, he continues, "Let no man do me the injury to report that I deny any members of Christ to be in Wales. I protest I have no such meaning, and would die upon the persuasion that the Lord hath His chosen in my dear country, and I trust the number of them will be daily increased." But having made this concession, he warns them not to mistake the "hirelings" for the true shepherds. "The outward calling of these dumb ministers," he says, "by all the presbyteries in the world, is but a seal pressed upon water, which will receive no impression. Labour, then, to have true pastors over you, and rest not until you have brought this to pass. In the meantime carry your children a thousand miles to a true minister of God to be baptized, rather than offer them unto your hirelings. The word preached, you see, you must have. Live according to it you must. Serve the Lord as He will, in every point, you must; or so be, for ever, in your confusion. Difficulties in this case must not be alleged; for if you seek the Lord with a sure purpose to find Him, He hath made a promise to be found of you. Away, then, with these speeches, 'How can we be provided with preaching? Our livings are impropriated—possessed by non-residents!' Is there no way to remove these dumb ministers but by supplication to her Majesty, and to

plant better in their stead? Indeed you will seek none—be it, you cannot remove them. Can you bestow no more to be instructed in the way of life than that which law hath already alienated from your possessions? You never made account of your tithes as of your own. For shame! bestow something *that is yours* to have salvation made known unto you. Contemn not the grace of God offered to you in these days of your peace.”

This was the Christian patriot's final appeal, and he left it to his countrymen as a parting legacy: “The inhabitants of the city of Thasus being besieged by the Athenians,” he says, “made a law, that whosoever would motion a peace to be concluded with the enemy, should die the death. Their city began to be distressed, and the people to perish with the sword and famine. Hegetorides, a citizen, pitying the estate of his country, took a halter about his neck, came to the judgment-place, and spake:—‘My masters, deal with me as you will; but in any case make peace with the Athenians, that my country may be saved by my death!’ My case is like this man's. I know not my danger in these things. I see you, my dear and native country, perish—it pitieth me. I come with a rope about my neck to save you. Howsoever it goeth with me, I labour that you may have the gospel preached among you. Though it cost my life, I think it well bestowed!”

These repeated appeals on behalf of neglected Wales irritated the enemies of Puritanism beyond measure. That a poor Welsh student of known Puritan principles, should dare to propose a plan for the evangelization of the Principality by means of *lay agency and voluntary contributions*, was such a mortal sin against the prelates, that nothing would appease their rage but the life-blood of the offender. From this time our young reformer had no quiet within her Majesty's dominions until his precious life was despatched. The emissaries of the bishops, like ravenous beasts, hunted him everywhere. His house and study at Northampton were ransacked, and the mayor of that town had strict orders from the Court of High Commission to apprehend him, and all others connected with the secret press; while the arrogant Dr. Some, of Cambridge, was employed to write against his books.

Penry has been charged by his contemporaries, and most subsequent historians, as the author of the "Martin Marprelate" tracts, the first of which was published in 1588. This charge is perfectly unfounded. There is not the least shadow of proof that he was in any way connected with them, save only that they were issued from the same press as his avowed works. These tracts were anonymous, while Penry always, with manly courage, appended his name to all his publications. The Marprelate tracts are written in a scoffing and sarcastic style; but Penry's style is invariably solemn and intensely earnest, even when most vehemently treating "the spoilers and murderers of his countrymen's souls." The following paragraph, copied from the 30th page of his "Exhortation," published the very same year as the first of the Marprelate tracts, amounts, one would think, to a demonstration, that the martyr, so far from being their author, most thoroughly detested their spirit. "I am now to come unto our bishops, and the rest that supply the place of ministers in Wales, who, inasmuch as they are the very ground-work of this miserable confusion, must not think much to have the words of the holy prophets, in times past spoken against their predecessors, the wicked priests and Levites, applied unto them. But in this place, being fallen into this jangling and prattling age of the world, wherein faith and the power of religion are thought, by the most part, to consist only in detestation of bishops and withstanders of reformation, I confess from my heart that I have been hardly drawn to deal with this wicked generation. Not because I would have these cormorants untouched, but lest I should seem to feed the humours of busy-bodies, who, increasing themselves still more unto ungodliness, think nothing so well spoken or written as that which is *satirical and biting*ly done against lord bishops and the rest of that stamp. As I would not nourish this *frantic conceit* in any, so far be it I should allow with my silence the butchers and stranglers of the souls of my dear countrymen."

When he could no longer remain with any safety in England, aided by the contributions of his friends, he took his interesting family with him, and fled to Scotland early in the year 1589.

He was most kindly received and entertained there, and was, during the whole of his sojourn in that country, fully employed in preaching and preparing works for the press. When the primate found that he was in Scotland, he instigated the Queen to write a letter to King James to desire him to send back the refugee, or to banish him from his kingdom. The Privy Council also issued a warrant to apprehend him. In compliance with the request of the Queen of England, the King of Scotland issued a decree of banishment against Penry; but the sturdy Scotch ministers "everywhere stayed the proclaiming thereof." He might have spent his life safely and usefully in Scotland; but his anxiety for his "dear native country," and his ardent desire to spread the light of the gospel there, would not allow him to prolong his stay in the North. We therefore find him, in September, 1592, in London. He had given up all hopes of doing any good to Wales by further appeals to the Queen and Parliament; but he intended, on his return from Scotland, to appeal to her Majesty for permission to exercise his ministry in the Principality. On his arrival in London he joined the Separatists there, who urged him to take office amongst them, but he would not. "It hath been my purpose," he said, "always to employ my small talent in my poor country of Wales, where I know that the poor people perish for want of knowledge; and this was the only cause of my coming out of that country where I was, and might have stayed privately all my life; even because I saw myself bound, in conscience, to labour for the calling of my poor kindred and countrymen to the knowledge of their salvation in Christ."

Having sojourned among the Separatists, to their mutual comfort and edification, for six months, he was taken on the 22nd day of March, 1593, committed to prison, and afterwards "was subjected to a trial which disgraces the name of English justice."¹ No statute of the realm condemned him, but the primate and his associates, thirsting for his blood, when they could not legally put him to death, hesitated not to become his *murderers*. On the 29th of May, 1593, at five o'clock in the afternoon, he was executed at St. Thomas-a-

¹ Sir Thomas Phillips, "Wales," p. 99. 1849.

Watering, Surrey, as secretly as it could be done, for fear of a popular tumult. He died in the thirty-fourth year of his age, leaving a widow and four young daughters, and a host of persecuted Christians, to deplore his loss.

Penry never meddled with politics. His only offences were his exposures, in strong language, of the glaring abuses by which the episcopal clergy in Wales ruined the souls of his countrymen, and his open confession of *Nonconformity* towards the close of his life. In the letters which he wrote to his wife and daughters, and the Lord Treasurer Burleigh, a few days previous to his death, we find some of the most touching expressions of tender affection, unswerving loyalty, Christian patriotism, and pious resignation, clothed in a style of simple, thrilling eloquence. Addressing his infant daughters, he says, "Show kindness unto the kindred whereof you are come, both of your father's side and mother's also, but especially, if ever you be able, show all forwardness in doing good unto my people and kindred in the flesh.

"The Welsh nation, now for many hundred years past, have been under the Lord's rod ; but I trust the time is come wherein He will show mercy unto them by causing the true light of the gospel to shine among them ; and, my good daughters, pray you earnestly unto the Lord, when you come to know what prayer is, for this ; *and be always ready to show yourselves helpful unto the least child of that poor country that shall stand in need of your loving support* ; in any case, repay the kindness, if you be able, which I owe unto my nearest kindred there ; as to my mother, brethren, and sisters, &c., whom, I am persuaded, will be most kind towards you and your mother unto their ability, even for my sake ; *and be an especial comfort, in my stead, unto the grey hairs of my poor mother*, whom the Lord used as the only means of my stay for me in the beginning of my studies, whereby I have come unto the knowledge of that most precious faith in Christ Jesus, in the defence whereof I stand at this present, in the great joy of my soul, though in much outward discomfort.

"Pray much and often for the prosperous reign and the preservation, body and soul, of her right excellent Majesty, my

dread Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth, under whose reign I have come unto this blessed knowledge and hope wherein I stand. The Lord show mercy unto her for it, both in this life and also in that great day.

“Show yourselves helpful and kind unto all strangers, and unto the people of Scotland, where I, your mother, and a couple of you lived as strangers, and yet were welcome, and found great kindness for the name of our God. Be tender-hearted towards the widow and the fatherless; both because the law of God and nature requireth this at your hands, and also because, for aught I know, I am likely to leave you fatherless and your mother a widow.

“Whatsoever becometh of you in outward regard, keep yourselves in this poor church, where I leave you, or in some other holy society of the saints. I doubt not but my God will stir up many of His children to show kindness unto my faithful sister and wife, your mother; and also unto you, even for my sake. Although you should be brought up in never so hard service, yet, my dear children, learn to read, that you may be conversant, day and night, in the word of the Lord. If your mother be able to keep you together, I doubt not but you shall learn both to write and read by her means. *I have left you four Bibles, each of you one; being the sole and only patrimony or dowry that I have for you.* I beseech you, and charge you, not only to keep them, but to read in them day and night; and before you read, and also in and after reading, be earnest in prayer and meditation, that you may understand and perform the good way of your God. . . . From close prison, with many tears, yet in much joy of the Holy Ghost, this 10th of 4th month of April, 1593, your poor father here upon earth, most careful to be joined with you for evermore in the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

“JOHN PENRY,

“A poor witness in this life unto the right of Jesus Christ, and against the abominations of the Roman Babel.”¹

In his letter to Lord Burleigh, written only seven days before his execution, he says, “And I thank God that whensoever

¹ Appendix B.

an end of my days comes, as *I look not to live this week to an end*, mine innocency shall benefit so much, as I shall die Queen Elizabeth's most faithful subject, even in the conscience of my very adversaries themselves, if they will be beholders thereof ;¹ and by my death convince them, before all the world, that I have lived so too. And my God, I trust, will one day cause my innocency to shine as the noonday before my gracious Prince.

"I am a poor young man, born and bred in the mountains of Wales. I am the first, since the last springing up of the gospel in this latter age, that laboured to have the blessed seed thereof sown in those barren mountains. I have often rejoiced before my God, as He knoweth, that I had the favour to be born and live under her Majesty, for the promoting of this work. In the earnest desire I had to see the gospel in my native country, and the contrary corruptions removed, I might well, as I confess in my published writings, with Hegetorides the Thracian, forget mine own danger ; but my loyalty to my Prince did I never forget. And being now to end my days before I am come to the one-half of my years in the likely course of nature, *I leave the success of my labours unto such of my countrymen as the Lord is to raise after me, for the accomplishing of that work which, in the calling of my country unto the knowledge of Christ's blessed gospel, I began.*"

Thus lived and thus died the PIONEER of Welsh Nonconformity, whose good name for ages has been blackened by the foul misrepresentations of bigoted or ignorant historians, but at length has had justice done to it. The sacrifice of his precious life was overruled for good as an important link in the chain of events which led to the overthrow of prelatical tyranny, and the consequent gradual cessation of persecution, and the triumph of religious liberty throughout the kingdom. The martyr's God raised up a host of worthy successors to accom-

¹ Care was taken to prevent, as far as possible, any impression favourable to his innocence, or the cause for which he suffered, to be produced at his death, by despatching him in a clandestine manner. "The Sheriff would not suffer him to speak to the people, nor make any profession of his faith towards God, or his loyalty to the Queen, but ordered him to be turned off in a hurry."—*Neal*.

plish the work which he so earnestly began, and his "DEAR COUNTRY OF WALES," whose spiritual miseries and destitution in his days were indescribably lamentable, and for the removal of which he prayed, laboured, suffered, and died, is at the present day as well furnished with the means of religious knowledge as any country under the sun.¹

Penry's expectation, that the Lord would raise some of his countrymen to accomplish the work which he had begun, was soon partly realized. In the course of ten or twelve years after his death we find a few earnest, eloquent, evangelical, and devoted ministers in the field. Among these, the well-known REES PRICHARD, Vicar of Llandovery, Caermarthenshire, occupied a conspicuous position. He was born at Llandovery, in the year 1579. His father, whose name was David ap Richard ap David ap Rees, ap David, was a gentleman of considerable property, and had a family of seven children, of whom Rees was the eldest. In 1597 he entered Jesus College, Oxford, and in April, 1602, he was ordained at Witham, in Essex, by John, suffragan bishop of Colchester. In August the same year he was promoted to the vicarage of Llandingad, his native parish, in which the town of Llandovery is situated.

There is a tradition that Mr. Prichard in his youth was addicted to the sinful habit of immoderate drinking, and that he was led to leave that, and ultimately every other sin, in the following singular manner:—He had a he-goat, which used to follow him to the ale-houses, and, occasionally, to drink a little ale. One day, in a drunken frolic with his companions, he forced the poor animal to drink to excess. Ever afterwards, the goat could not by any means be induced to cross the threshold of an ale-house, nor to taste intoxicating

¹ The foregoing sketch has been extracted almost *verbatim* from the life of the martyr, by the Rev. Dr. Waddington. It is a disgrace to the Nonconformists of Wales that several editions of this admirable work have not been circulated amongst them alone. Dr. Waddington has laid the Welsh nation under lasting obligations by raising such a monument to one of the best and most ill-treated of all the sons of Cambria. Theophilus Jones, in his voluminous "History of Breconshire," does not so much as refer to his name. This is not to be wondered at, for, with all his accomplishments and industry, he was the slave of bigotry and narrow-mindedness.

drink. This repugnance of the irrational animal to intoxicating drink caused the young clergyman to think of his own ways, and the result was his real conversion to God. When he became a converted man, he soon distinguished himself as a most earnest and popular preacher.

Sir George Devereux, uncle to Robert, Earl of Essex, and his guardian during his minority, was at that time residing at Llwyn-y-brain, near Llandovery, and was one of Mr. Prichard's constant hearers. It is probable, also, that the young earl often resided there with his uncle. The vicar thus became intimately acquainted with his lordship, and was appointed his chaplain. As the chaplain of a nobleman, he was enabled to hold the rectory of Llanedi, Caermarthenshire, with the vicarage of Llandingad, to which he was presented, in 1613, by King James I. In the following year he was made prebendary of the collegiate church of Brecon, and in 1626, chancellor of St. David's.

It seems somewhat mysterious how a man of Mr. Prichard's piety, evangelical sentiments, and anti-popish views, got so many preferments at a time when most of his brethren of the same principles were either ejected, or suffered only to occupy very inferior positions in the Church. His intimacy with the Earl of Essex, and the fact that he was himself a gentleman of considerable property, may possibly account for it. The system of pluralities, as a rule, has been the bane of the Established Church, but Mr. Prichard's case was an exception. During the reign of King James I. he was probably the only efficient preacher in the diocese of St. David's. If he had been in possession of only one living, his valuable services would have been confined to one locality, as it is not likely that any of that generation of careless, ignorant, or immoral clergy would either invite or admit him into their pulpits; but being a pluralist, his official duties opened the way for him to divide his labours among several distant localities. His stated visits to St. David's, St. Lenox, near Narberth, a demesne attached to the chancellorship of St. David's, and Llanedi, were attended with much good. Vast multitudes flocked to hear him to each of these places; and as neither the churches nor even the spacious

cathedral of St. David's were large enough to contain his overflowing congregations, he preached in the open air. This irregularity so offended the High Churchmen of the time, that, though a dignitary, charges were preferred against him in the spiritual court. We are not informed how he got through his troubles. It is supposed that he refers to this circumstance in one of his poems, where he says that some people sought to devour his soul; and in another, where he praises his God for confounding the malicious designs of his enemies.

This excellent minister, like hundreds of his brethren in England, and a few in Wales, undoubtedly felt himself in a very unpleasant position, when King Charles I., at the instigation of the popish Laud, enforced the reading of the Book of Sports. We have never seen his name in any printed book or manuscript as a sufferer for disobeying the King's impious injunction, and local tradition is silent on the subject. It would be highly uncharitable to suppose, without sufficient evidence, that a man of such exemplary holiness, and Puritan strictness in regard to the sanctification of the Sabbath, as his works show, could have bent his conscience to read the King's declaration; but how his disobedience escaped the censure of his superiors must remain an unexplained mystery. His biographer, the late Rev. Rice Rees, B.D., supposes that his diocesan, Dr. Field, did not strictly enforce compliance in his diocese; but if he exercised leniency towards Mr. Prichard, he did not do so in every case, for we find that Mr. Phillips, of Pembrokeshire, the father of the distinguished Nonconformist, Peregrine Philips, "was a sufferer for not reading the Book of Sports."

Mr. Prichard lived to see the breaking out of the civil wars. Like the clergy and gentry of Wales generally, he was a firm royalist. He gave away the bulk of his income for three years to support the King's party. During his whole life he was commendably liberal and charitable to the poor, and in his last will he left eleven small fields, near Llandovery, whose rent at that time amounted to £20 a year, to support a free school in that town; but Thomas Mainwaring, who had married the granddaughter and heiress of the vicar, taking advantage of

some informality in the will, after paying a schoolmaster for two or three years, appropriated the property to his own use.

The good Vicar of Llandovery lived and died a sound conformist ; but most, if not all his converts, soon after his death, formed themselves into Nonconformist societies. Caermarthen-shire, ever since his death, has been the stronghold of Nonconformity. His case is a striking illustration of the sentiment expressed by the celebrated John Berridge, Vicar of Everton, in a letter to Lady Huntingdon. "But you say," he remarks, "the Lord is sending many gospel labourers into the Church. True ; and with a view, I think, of calling His people out of it. Because, when such ministers are removed by death, or transported to another vineyard, I see no fresh gospel labourer succeed them, which obliges the forsaken flocks to fly to a meeting. And what else can they do ? If they have tasted of manna, and hunger for it, they cannot feed on heathen chaff, nor yet on legal crusts, though baked by some starch Pharisee quite up to perfection."¹

Rees Prichard's name is much more familiar throughout the Welsh nation than the names of any of his celebrated contemporaries. His poems have immortalized his memory. During the first twenty-eight years of his ministry no Welsh Bibles were to be found anywhere in the Principality, save only on the pulpits of the parish churches. The people were consequently necessarily ignorant of spiritual things. Perceiving that they were passionately fond of poetry and music, he turned the substance of his solid, scriptural, and popular sermons into verse. Written copies of these were circulated among the people, and proved eminently useful in conveying correct ideas of religious doctrines and duties to a sadly neglected and ignorant population. He only published one of his poems in his lifetime ; but in 1646, two years after his death, several of them were published in one volume, under the title "*Y Seren Fore, neu Ganwyll y Cymry*;" that is, "*The Morning Star ; or, the Welshman's Candle*." In the year 1672 the celebrated Nonconformist, Stephen Hughes, published a new edition, containing a large number of additional poems,

¹ "*Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon*," vol. ii. p. 423. 1839.

from the author's manuscripts. Since that time about fifteen editions have been published ; but the last, edited by the late Rev. Rice Rees, B.D., to which is prefixed a memoir of the author, is incomparably superior to all the previous ones in completeness, correctness, and elegance. No book in the Welsh language, with the exception of the Bible, has been so extensively circulated, and read with so much benefit, as the vicar's poems. His volume is a complete body of doctrinal and practical divinity. The style is simple, sententious, and remarkably vigorous. The sentiments are highly Calvinistic, but without the least tincture of Antinomianism. Several of the most striking verses have long since become national proverbs. The vicar, in describing the moral degradation of his countrymen, and the disgraceful character of the clergy, uses language quite as strong as John Penry ; but he wrote in the Welsh tongue, and his compositions were not published till after his death : he thus escaped troubles which otherwise would most probably have fallen to his lot.

Rees Prichard has no monument erected over his grave, and, indeed, the spot where he rests is unknown ; however, there is no danger that his name shall be forgotten while the "Welshman's Candle" continues to give light, and scriptural religion retains its hold on the hearts of the sons of Cambria.

It seems that the Vicar of Llandovery was the only pious and efficient conforming minister in the Principality during the reigns of Kings James I. and Charles I. All his worthy contemporaries were more or less tainted with "Inconformity." They consequently became objects of distrust, annoyance, and persecution, and were ultimately driven from the pulpits of the Established Church. These excellent men were the fathers and founders of the Nonconformist churches of Wales ; and their lives, labours, and sufferings will be the subject of the first chapter of our history.



CHAPTER I.

FROM THE RISE OF NONCONFORMITY TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CIVIL WARS, A.D. 1633—1642.

Character of the Founders of Nonconformity—Proceedings of the Bishops—Biographical Sketches of W. Wroth, W. Erbery, W. Cradock, M. Matthews, R. Symonds, A. Mostyn, H. Walter, R. Powell—Several other Young Men commence preaching—Formation of the Churches at Llanvaches, Mynyddislwyn, Cardiff, and Swansea—Favourable Measures of the Parliament—Opposition of the Welsh Clergy and Gentry—Publication of the New Testament—Breaking out of the Civil Wars—The Welsh Nonconformists fleeing to England.

THE fathers and founders of Nonconformity in the Principality were not men of wild fancies, unsettled minds, and disposed to differ from others merely for the sake of differing. With one solitary exception, they were men of sound judgment, orthodox sentiments, and peaceable disposition. Having been deprived of their livings, as parish ministers, on account of their pious endeavours to save the perishing multitudes around them, they formed separate Nonconformist churches; not to counteract the efforts of the Established Church to evangelize the nation, but to supply her omission of that duty.

The Protestant religion had been established in this kingdom thirty years before the Bible was translated into the language of Wales; thirty-four years before we find any Welshman recommending anything like separation from the established worship, and eighty-one years before any actual separation took place. The Church had the whole field to herself for these eighty-one years, but nothing worthy to be recorded had been done during

this long period to enlighten the nation, except the laudable work of translating the Scriptures into the vernacular language, and this had been accomplished by a few worthy individuals upon their own responsibility. The mass of the nation were as ignorant and superstitious in 1639 as they were in 1558, with the exception of a few thousands, who had been enlightened by the earnest preaching of a small number of persecuted clergymen. Most of these good men, when they could no longer retain their places in the Establishment with a clear conscience, became the founders of Nonconformist churches. May we not naturally infer from these facts that Wales at this day would have been in the same deplorable condition as Ireland, if Protestant Nonconformity had not done for it what the Established Church was either unwilling or unadapted to accomplish?

In the year 1633 the Bishops of St. David's and Llandaff, at the instigation of Archbishop Laud, commenced a systematic persecution of all those pious clergymen in their dioceses who were not strict conformists. The impious injunction to read the "Book of Sports" exposed those devoted ministers to various troubles. The following extracts from the annual account of his province, which Laud addressed to the King, will give some idea of the number and sufferings of the Welsh Nonconformist ministers of that period:—¹

"January 2, 1633.—My lord of St. David's is now resident in his diocese, and hath so been ever since the last spring, and professes that he will take great care hereafter to whom he gives holy orders. His lordship certifies that he hath suspended a lecturer for his Inconformity."

"January 2, 1634.—The bishop (of St. David's) is careful whom he ordains. The lecturers in these parts are not many, yet of late he hath been driven first to suspend, and afterwards to dismiss, one Roberts, a Welsh lecturer, for Inconformity; and one or two others, that had with their giddiness offered to distemper the people, he hath likewise driven out of the diocese. His lordship complains grievously, and not without cause."

"The Bishop of Llandaff certifies that this last year he

¹ The Lambeth MSS. Vol. 943.

visited in person, and found that William Erbery, Vicar of St. Mary's, in Cardiff, and Walter Cradock, his curate, have been very disobedient to your Majesty's injunctions, and have preached very schismatically and dangerously to the people. That for this he hath given the vicar a judicial admonition, and will farther proceed, if he do not submit; and for his curate, being a bold, ignorant young fellow, he hath suspended him, and taken away his licence to serve the cure."

"January 2, 1635.—Llandaff.—In this diocese the bishop found, in his triennial visitation the former year, two noted schismatics, Wroth and Erbery, that lead away many simple people after them; and finding that they wilfully persisted in their schismatical course, he hath carefully preferred articles against them in the High Commission Court, where, when the case is ready for hearing, they shall receive according to the merits of it."

"St. David's.—The late bishop (now of Hereford) hath caused to be questioned in the High Commission Court, and suspended, one Roberts, a lecturer, for Inconformity. *Three or four others*, who were suspended, he hath released, upon hope given of their obedience to the Church. He complains much, and surely with cause enough, that there are few ministers, in those poor and remote places, that are able to preach and instruct the people." And yet those who were able to preach and instruct the people were not permitted to do it.

"1636.—St. David's.—There is one Matthews, the Vicar of Penmain, that preaches against the keeping of all holy-days, with divers other, as fond or profane opinions. The bishop hath inhibited him, and if that doth not serve, I shall call him into your High Commission Court."

"Llandaff.—The bishop complains that whereas Mr. Wroth and Mr. Erbery are in the High Commission Court for their schismatical proceedings, the slow prosecution there against them makes both of them persist in their by-ways, and their followers judge them faultless. But for this I humbly present to your Majesty this answer, that now the loss of two terms, by reason of the sickness, hath cast the proceedings out of that court, as well as of others, behindhand."

"1638.—Llandaff.—There were in this diocese last year but two refractory ministers, Mr. Wroth and Mr. Erbery. The former hath submitted; but the other would neither submit nor satisfy his parishioners, to whom he had given public offence. So he resigned his vicarage, and hath thereby left the diocese in peace." We are not informed what kind of submission Mr. Wroth was forced to make. However, he was ejected from his living.

"St. David's.—Some had been meddling with questions his Majesty had forbidden." Preaching Calvinistic doctrines, most probably.

"1640.—St. Asaph.—A conventicle of mean persons was laid hold on, and complaint was made to the Council of the Marches."

These persecuting proceedings of the bishops compelled the excellent ministers mentioned in the foregoing extracts, with some others, and most of their flocks, to quit the Establishment, and set up private meetings in dwelling-houses, and wherever they could. This ultimately led to the formation of regularly organized Nonconformist churches.

The leader in this movement was the venerable WILLIAM WROTH, Rector of Llanvaches, near Chepstow, in Monmouthshire. This excellent person, descended from one of the most ancient and respectable families in the county of Monmouth, was born in the year 1570, at or near Abergavenny. He matriculated at Jesus College, Oxford, on the 21st of January, 1586. All the information respecting him furnished by the entry in the register of Jesus College is, that he was the son of a gentleman of Monmouthshire; that he matriculated in the sixteenth year of his age; and that he was at the time one of Mr. Case's pupils. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Case was a very eminent scholar, but "strongly inclined to the doctrines of the Church of Rome." A large number of the Monmouthshire gentry of that age were Roman Catholics, and it is quite possible that young Wroth's parents, or guardians, were of that persuasion, so that it was natural for them to place him under such a tutor. Mr. Charles, of Bala, says that Mr. Wroth remained at Oxford fourteen years.¹ As Mr. Charles does not give any authority for this

¹ "Trysorfa Ysbrydol" for 1799, p. 155.

statement, we feel disposed to doubt its correctness. It is, however, probable that he spent a considerable time at the University, or that he returned, after an absence of five or six years, to complete his course, for we find in the register of Christchurch College that William Wroth was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts on the 18th of February, 1595. As no person of that name is mentioned in any of the registers of the University for that period except the William Wroth of Monmouthshire, who matriculated in 1586, it is almost certain that the same person is referred to in both entries. The fact that he matriculated at Jesus College, and took his degree at Christchurch, does not in the least affect the validity of this supposition, for removals from one college to another in the University in those days were frequent.

We are not informed when or where Mr. Wroth was ordained. He was presented to the living of Llanvaches by Sir Edward Lewis, of the Van, near Caerphilly, probably before the year 1600. The Rev. Joshua Thomas,¹ on the authority of an undated manuscript which he saw in Monmouthshire, states that Mr. Wroth, for some time after his ordination, was addicted to levity, carnal mirth, and music, and that his conversion was effected in the following singular manner:—A gentleman, a relation of Mr. Wroth's, and at whose house he boarded, had an important lawsuit to be tried in London: the case turning in his favour, he sent home the pleasing news, requesting his family to invite his friends and neighbours to meet at his house on a certain day, when he expected to return, to spend the evening in feasting and mirth. The clergyman bought a new violin for the occasion. The company having assembled, anxiously expecting the arrival of their friend, to their indescribable mortification a messenger came, with the sad news that he had been suddenly seized by death on his way home. It is easier to imagine than describe the feelings of all present on the reception of this melancholy message. Mr. Wroth, amidst the general consternation, cast away his violin, and falling on his knees in the midst of the company, most fervently prayed for the blessing of God upon this alarming providence. It is

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 22-3. 1778.

added, that from this time he became a changed man, devoting his fine talents and superior gifts to the most faithful and exemplary discharge of the duties of his ministry.

We see no reason to doubt the truth of this relation, but Mr. Thomas's supposition that the circumstance occurred some time between 1620 and 1630 is evidently groundless. Mr. Wroth in 1620 was above fifty years of age, and it appears very improbable, to say the least, that a clergyman, converted at that age, would become so eminent and universally known as to be denominated "the apostle of Wales." A most correct and trustworthy recorder of events, the writer of the "Broadmead Records," referring to the religious state of the kingdom from 1600 to 1640, says:—"And there were raised up divers holy and powerful ministers and preachers, in and about that time, in this nation; whereof in these parts was one Mr. Wroth, in Monmouthshire, not far from this city of Bristol, who for the powerfulness and efficaciousness of his preaching, with the exemplary holiness of his life, was called the apostle of Wales; for the papist, and all sorts almost, honoured him for a holy man. By his ministry it pleased the Lord to convert many, so that they left their sinful courses in the world; after which he caused them to separate from the worship of the world, and gathered them into the gospel order of church government. Which light of theirs began to shine very much in this part of the land. About the same time God raised up, in this city of Bristol, in Philip's parish, one Mr. Yeamans, a zealous preacher, that, although in some things he, keeping in his place, did observe according to the time that then was, yet would not suffer his hearers to use any blind devotion, as bowing at the name of Jesus, and ignorant or rather customary walking and profaning the Sabbath; to whom the awakened souls and honest-minded people did flock very much to hear him. They sat under his light near twenty years."¹

This Mr. Yeamans settled at St. Philip's, Bristol, about 1604, and died in 1633.² It does not by any means appear natural that the writer of the Records would have mentioned Mr.

¹ The "Broadmead Records," pp. 7, 8. 1847.

² Fuller's "Dissent in Bristol," pp. 13, 15. 1840.

Wroth, a minister residing in the country, more than twenty miles from Bristol, before Mr. Yeamans, a minister in his own city, had not the former been known and celebrated, as a gospel preacher, before the latter. These considerations lead us to date Mr. Wroth's conversion at least as early as the year 1600.

Llanvaches, during Mr. Wroth's time, was the Jerusalem of the religious people of South Wales, and the surrounding English counties. Such vast multitudes flocked there to hear him, that he was often obliged to preach in the churchyard, as the church could contain only a small proportion of them. William Erbery, in a pamphlet published in 1652, while treating the founders of the Anti-Pedobaptist cause in Wales most uncharitably, furnishes a striking proof of Mr. Wroth's uncommon popularity, and of the high religious character of his followers. Referring to Wales, he says: "For as there the first was an Independent church, so the Baptized churches last were there, unless there may be some in Scotland since. It is only of late the Baptized churches came and increased in Wales, and yet it is but the weakest of the Christians there are fallen into the waters. For I will speak the truth without partiality. There were not more spiritual and suffering saints in any part of English ground than were in Wales; so self-denying and dying to the world—yea, so wise-hearted and knowing Christians: let all the English counties about them testify, and tell how many saints from Somerset, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Radnorshire, Glamorganshire, &c., came in multitudes to Llanvaches. What light and labour in the Spirit was there!—how heavenly-minded!—what holy language among them!—what watching!—what prayers night and day, in the way they went, in the work they did, at their plough; everywhere in private that spirit of prayer and pureness of heart appeared. Nothing of ordinances was then mentioned, but with fear in themselves, and forcing others by the Spirit, to living in them; all was spirit and life the saints in Wales then looked for."¹

The apostolic Rector of Llanvaches did not confine his labours to his own parish. He often visited different parts of Wales,

¹ Erbery's "Apocripha," p. 8. 1652.

and the adjoining English counties. The religious people at Bristol were occasionally cheered by his visits to that city, and and "would run after him, and the other reforming ministers of South Wales, like hungry souls for food."¹ His earnest preaching, extraordinary popularity, and uncanonical, but apostolic proceedings, as a matter of course, excited the jealousy and hatred of his worldly, idle, and ignorant clerical neighbours. He was often annoyed, but during the primacy of Archbishop Abbott, like many other Puritans, he was permitted to retain his living. It is said that Dr. T. Field, who was Bishop of Llandaff from 1619 to 1627, once asked him angrily how he dared to infringe the canons of the Church by his irregular proceedings. To this reprimand Mr. Wroth replied with tears, "There are thousands of immortal souls around me thronging to perdition, and should I not use all means likely to succeed to save them?" This mild and soul-pitying reply so affected the bishop that he also wept. Soon after the elevation of Laud to the see of Canterbury, "the blessed apostle of South Wales," as we have already seen, was dragged to the Court of High Commission, and in 1638 was deprived of his living. In the following year he formed an Independent church at Llanvaches, and in the beginning of the year 1642, at an advanced age, he finished his useful career, and was buried, according to his own request, under the threshold of the parish church, where he exercised his ministry for about forty years. "Mr. Wroth was by the Lord laid asleep, according to his prayer, before the war, which for a great while was feared; and therefore he petitioned that he might never hear a drum beat in order thereto."²

The few references to him left upon record by his contemporaries, lead us to regard Mr. Wroth as a most amiable man, a Christian of the highest order, and a pastor worthy to be imitated by all the ministers of Jesus Christ. He excelled in kindness and hospitality. Of the multitudes who came from distant parts to hear him, it is said that he was accustomed to invite great numbers to his own house, to partake of cold col-

¹ The "Broadmead Records," p. 9.

² Ibid. p. 29. "Trysorfa Ysbrydol," p. 156. 1799.

lations, and rest between the morning and afternoon service. After asking a blessing, he used to address the company in the following or similar words: "Friends, here is good food for you, the gift of a good God; eat and welcome." He would then retire to his study till the afternoon service.

The writer of the "Broadmead Records," p. 27, referring to Mr. Wroth's visits to Bristol, says: "But sometimes Mr. Wroth would come over and preach to them, strengthening them in the Lord, who lodged at Mr. Listun's, whose children the said Mr. Wroth would use to teach them at night-times this verse following:

" 'Thy sin, thy end, the death of Christ,
The eternal pangs of hell,
The day of doom, the joys of heaven,
These six remember well.' "

Thus, this holy and humble man, desiring the good of souls, would be doing good wherever he came, both to young and old."

His friend and son in the gospel, Walter Cradock, says of him,—“It was once a speech of a reverend minister, who, because of the multitude of his hearers, was often necessitated to preach in the churchyard, *that there was not one person in that congregation whose spiritual state he did not fully know*; and the success of his work was answerably exceeding great and glorious: *Neither, said he, is there any sermon I preach, wherein I teach them not at least one lesson more than any one of them all knew before, and yet I learn from them, throughout the week, as much, or more, than they do of me on the Lord's day.*”¹ His manner in the pulpit was very agreeable; his voice was strong and melodious, his enunciation distinct, and his style simple, striking, and intelligible to all his hearers. All his sermons were adapted to arouse the conscience as well as to instruct the understanding. Such was William Wroth, the father and founder of Nonconformity in Wales.

Amongst Mr. Wroth's contemporaries and fellow-labourers, the first place belongs to WILLIAM ERBURY, or Erbery, B.A., in point of seniority, if not on account of his usefulness and

¹ "Sermon before the Parliament," p. 12. 1646.

eminence. This good man was born in the parish of Roath, near Cardiff, in the year 1604. He was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford. After completing his course, and taking his degree at the University, he was episcopally ordained, and commenced his ministry at Newport, Monmouthshire,¹ and afterwards became Vicar of St. Mary's, Cardiff. He was ejected from that living in 1638, for refusing to read the "Book of Sports," and other nonconforming practices. The Bishop of Llandaff says that he left the diocese in peace after his ejection. He then most probably traversed different parts of the Principality as an itinerant preacher. In 1642 he was plundered in Wales by the King's party, and was consequently compelled to flee to England for refuge, where he became a chaplain to a regiment of the Parliament's army. From this time to the time of his death, which occurred in the month of April, 1654, it does not appear that he returned to Wales to settle there, but only occasionally visited it. During these visits he often preached, but not in the regular congregations, or in connection with the recognized ministers. He says that he was not invited or admitted by the ministers to their pulpits, on account of the peculiarity of his views.² Mr. Erbery, several years before his death, was visited by a sore affliction, which to some degree deranged his mind. Previous to this he is said to have been a man of good parts, and an excellent scholar, zealous and successful in his ministry, and particularly grave and religious in his life.³ He published from time to time a vast number of tracts and small pamphlets, twenty-three of which were collected and reprinted, in a quarto volume, by some of the author's admirers, in 1658, entitled "The Testimony of William Erbery left upon Record." This volume is of little historical value, but it furnishes ample proofs of the author's piety, fine talents, and, unhappily, his partial mental derangement. Here and there we find in it flashes of wit, and some of the most correct, sublime, and telling ideas, but interspersed with such a mass of religious nonsense, as none but a mentally deranged man would have penned.

¹ Erbery's "Testimony," p. 152. 1658.

² Ibid. p. 249. 1658.

³ Brook's "Lives of the Puritans," vol. iii. p. 190. 1813.

Mr. Erbery's contemporaries give various and contradictory representations of his sentiments. By some he is said to have been a Socinian; by others, "one of the chief of the Anabaptists;" while another class give him the appellation of a "turbulent Antinomian:" but all these are misrepresentations. His defence before the Committee for Plundered Ministers, at Westminster, March 9th, 1652, sufficiently proves that he was not a Socinian, though his statement of his sentiments on the person and death of Christ is very confused, mystical, and somewhat unintelligible. The numberless remarks on baptism and the Anabaptists, to be met with on almost every page of his works, show that he was as far as the poles are asunder from the views of that party; and his constant inculcation of the necessity of spirituality of mind and holiness of conduct, throughout all his writings, acquits him from the charge of Antinomianism. The truth is, that it would be a difficult task for any one, after reading carefully every line which he wrote, to state in plain words what was his creed, and it is very doubtful whether the good man himself knew what it was. Yet, amidst all his confusions and mystical expressions, it is perfectly plain that he was a strenuous advocate of inward and outward holiness, and as strenuously opposed to the idea of a visible church, the ministry, and the outward ordinances of religion. If it were proper to classify him with any particular party, he must be placed among the Quakers. His views of the ministry, the ordinances, &c., were similar to theirs. He never actually joined them, his wife did. The pious but unfortunate Christopher Love, a native of Cardiff, entertained to the last a most affectionate regard towards Mr. Erbery, notwithstanding all his failings. He thus observes: "As for Mr. Erbery, though he is fallen into dangerous opinions, yet he, being my spiritual father, I do naturally care for him; and my heart cleaves more to him than to any man in the world. I speak to the praise of God, he was the instrument of my conversion nearly twenty years ago, and the means of my education at the University, for which kindness, the half of what I have in the world I could readily part with for his relief. It is true, about eight or nine years since, he was plundered in Wales, and came to see me at

Windsor Castle ; but a son could not make more of a father than I did of him, according to my ability. When I had not twelve pounds in the world, I let him have six of it ; and I procured him to be chaplain to Major Skippon's regiment, where he had eight shillings per day." ¹ Of Mr. Erbery's piety there can be not the least doubt ; but the strange views which he had adopted and propagated against the gathering of churches, the ministry, and the ordinances, rendered him worse than useless as a public man, and to some extent counteracted the influence of his brethren in their efforts to do good. How many ministers of superior talents, undoubted piety, and occupying commanding positions, have ruined themselves and the cause of Christ, in many places and ages, by promulgating eccentric and extravagant opinions on subjects confessedly not fundamental ! William Erbery, who might have been a signal blessing to Wales, did, by his eccentricities there, as well as in England, incalculable harm to the cause of scriptural religion ; but he was more excusable than many, on account of his mental affliction. We have not been able to learn where he died and was buried.

Since writing the foregoing sketch we have seen a rare pamphlet, published in 1685, entitled "A Winding Sheet for Mr. Baxter's Dead ; or, those whom he hath killed and slain in his Catholic Communion sweetly embalmed and decently buried again ; being an Apology for several Ministers—viz., Mr. Erbery, Mr. Cradock, Mr. Vavasor Powell, and Mr. Morgan Lloyd." On the third page we have the following account of Mr. Erbery : "That unpleasing work of ripping open the faults of the dead I leave to Mr. Baxter, who seems to have a particular gift that way. Mr. Erbery, then, before he was taken ill of his whimsies, was a good scholar, of smart parts, very serious and successful in his preaching, and very grave and religious in his life and practice. This character, those that knew him, I dare say, better than our severe censor of the dead, scruple not to give him. A very judicious person, of a considerable figure, no way infected with his distemper, told me—'Mr. Erbery's disease lay in his head, not in his

¹ Love's "Vindication," p. 36. 1651.

heart;’ that is, his latter exorbitances rose rather from the disorder in his body or brain than any corrupt hereticalness in his mind ; which also were the thoughts of others very well acquainted with Mr. Erbery, who have likewise told me that he retained his love to good people to the last. Mr. Baxter cannot but know that persons that are overrun with a deep and radicated melancholy may be sometimes so influenced by a particular *mania* as to be guilty of very wild and extravagant actions, who yet, when and as for themselves, are very serious persons. And why might not poor Mr. Erbery have allowed him a grain of some such charitable supposition? But as for Mr. Erbery’s own printed writings, in which, if any should say that there are too many wild expressions, that look not unlike the effusions of a distempered brain, I confess I cannot deny it. Howbeit, upon that very account, I can and do entertain favourable thoughts of the person himself, who, I think, should be the object of our pity, not of our censorious reproach.”

Of the small company of young and devoted ministers who assisted the aged William Wroth in the gathering and formation of the first Nonconformist churches in Wales, WALTER CRADOCK was probably the most talented, laborious, and extensively useful. This eminent person was born at Trevela, in the parish of Llangwmucha, near Usk, in Monmouthshire. He was heir to an estate worth at that time £60 a year. We have not been able to ascertain the year of his birth, as his name is not to be found in the registers of the University of Oxford, though he was educated there, and the register of his native parish does not go so far back as the seventeenth century. It is most probable that he was born some time between the years 1606 and 1610. The Bishop of Llandaff, as we have seen, called him, in 1633, “a bold, ignorant *young* fellow.” Having been brought up in the immediate neighbourhood of Llanvaches, he had opportunities to hear the apostolic Wroth from his childhood, and it is almost certain that he was brought to the knowledge of the truth, through his instrumentality, in his early youth. On his leaving the University, he settled as curate, first at Peterston-upon-Ely, in

Glamorganshire, and afterwards at St. Mary's, Cardiff. In 1633, the bishop took away his license to serve that cure for his refusal to read the "Book of Sports." After his ejection from Cardiff, it is said that even his own relations turned bitterly against him, on account of his Nonconformity. Being thus discouraged in his own country, he went to North Wales. Through some providence, unknown to us, he was admitted to serve as curate in the parish church of Wrexham, in Denbighshire. His earnest ministry there soon excited considerable attention, and was attended with extraordinary success. "Instead of reading the morning prayers, as the manner before was, he expounded the Scriptures with such heavenly fire and plainness, as greatly affected the people, so that, when the bells would toll at six o'clock in the morning, the people would presently flock from town and country to hear him, and fill that large church. And by both his preaching and expounding, a great reformation followed, which had not followed upon the reading of the Common Prayer, and many sinners were turned to the Lord, and, among the rest, those eminent saints and famous preachers, Mr. Morgan Lloyd and David ap Hugh. This, you must know, could not fail of kindling the devil's rage and envy; and accordingly a certain maltster, named Timothy Middleton, who was related to a great family in those parts, asking a certain innkeeper at Wrexham, what was the matter at their town, that he sold less malt than usual to them, received for answer, that it was because a Mr. Walter Cradock, from South Wales, had changed the people by his preaching. Upon this he grew angry, and said that he would drive him away; and he was as good as his word, for he made interest with some gentry, and had him driven away, and so he triumphed for a time in his iniquity."¹

Mr. Cradock was not permitted to exercise his ministry at Wrexham for more than one year, but during that short period he left a lasting impression on the town, and the country around, and laid the foundation of the Nonconformist interest in that part of the Principality. The enemies of religion throughout North Wales, for a hundred and fifty years after-

¹ Edmund Jones's "Life of Evan Williams," pp. 86-7. 1750.

wards, were accustomed to call all serious people, by way of reproach, after his name, *Cradockians*.

On his departure from Wrexham, Mr. Cradock turned his face again towards the south, and on his way he spent some time with his friend Richard Symonds, at Shrewsbury. There young Richard Baxter became acquainted with him, and was led, by observing the excellency of his character, to entertain high opinions of the cause for which he was a sufferer. According to Baxter, Mr. Cradock was then pursued by the bishop's agents, and concealed himself from them under the name of Williams.¹

From Shrewsbury he proceeded as far as Llanvair Waterdine, on the borders of the counties of Hereford and Radnor, where he was kindly received, and hospitably entertained, by Sir Robert Harley, of Brampton Briars, a sincere friend of the persecuted Puritans. It appears that he remained at this place three or four years. During this period he made several excursions to the neighbouring counties of Radnor, Brecknock, Montgomery, and Cardigan, to preach the gospel to his benighted countrymen, and his self-denying labours were crowned with signal success. "In Cardiganshire his ministry was eminently blessed; and, among other instances of the sovereign and free mercy of God, one well deserves recording. A gentleman who lived near where he preached, when he visited that county, and was particularly inimical to his doctrine and preaching, ridiculed him in his conversation, and made a mock of him in verses, which he published, and opposed his ministry by all means. It so fell out, by God's purpose, that once when Mr. Cradock was preaching in the open field (the place where he meant to speak in being not large enough to contain his hearers), Mr. Morgan Howell, which was the gentleman's name, got together a football play, in order to interrupt the preacher, and went so far as to endeavour to strike the ball against him; but being prevented, and falling, he so sprained his ancle that he could not move, and was thus compelled to hear the sermon, which was overruled by God to his conversion; and, as an evidence of its reality, he took Mr. Cradock

¹ Baxter's "Catholic Communion Defended," p. 28. 1684.

to his house, received him whenever he came to the county, and at length became himself a teacher of the truth of Jesus, and established the first church of believers in his neighbourhood." ¹

In the year 1639 we find Mr. Cradock at Llanvaches, assisting the aged Mr. Wroth to organize the Congregational church there. He was appointed Mr. Wroth's assistant, and on his death became his successor. When the civil war broke out, Mr. Cradock, and most of the male members of his church, with several other Nonconformist ministers, and professors from South Wales, fled for refuge to Bristol. A particular account of this circumstance is thus recorded in the "Broadmead Records," pp. 29-31: "And this city being now possessed with the Parliament's army, many of the ministers and professors from Wales were fain to make haste from their families, being like to be taken by the Commission of Array, and fled by night, some one way and some another, and came to this city, and joined (namely, most of the church at Llanvaches) with the church at Bristol. These two churches being thus come together, and now having an opportunity to have the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to be administered to them, by reason Mr. Cradock was come; for unto that time, although they had separated about two years from the world, yet were they not in a settled way with a pastor over them, but Mr. Cradock being pastor over the church from Llanvaches, they sat down together and brake bread; he being the administrator, first in the Dolphin, in the great room, then afterwards sometimes at a baker's house, upon James' Back, who was a member of the church; after that, they had the use of a small public place to themselves, called 'T'Ewins, by the Tolzey, where they used to preach and celebrate the ordinance of the Lord, as it was delivered. And so they continued and kept together in church fellowship, breaking bread, and prayers, until Bristol was delivered up to the King's forces, which was in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and forty-three. Then those of Wales, and most of the professors of this city, were fain to journey to London;

¹ Preface to Charles and Oliver's edition of Cradock's Works, pp. 4, 5. 1800.

and thus going, a little way they were guarded by a conduct of the King's soldiers, according to articles agreed upon at the delivering the city. But by the same guard they were stripped and robbed in the country, contrary to the articles, and so left them, those that had horses, to go on foot. When they came to London, the said people of Wales and those of Bristol joined together, and did commonly meet at Great Allhallows for the most part; only those professors that were baptized before they went up, they did sit down with Mr. Kiffin, and his church in London, being likewise baptized."¹

Mr. Cradock, when he reached London, was appointed the stated preacher at Allhallows the Great. Here he delivered the sermons and expositions which were afterwards printed. He continued in this situation till 1646, when he, and all the other ministers who had fled from Wales at the breaking out of the war, returned to the Principality, to be itinerant preachers there under the auspices of the Parliament. It appears that Mr. Cradock, from this time to the time of his death, resided chiefly in Wales, only occasionally visiting London, when his official duties required his presence there. He was unquestionably the leading person in the execution of the measures adopted for the propagation of the gospel in Wales during the interregnum, as we shall see in the next chapter. He finished his suffering, holy, and most useful career, in great joy and peace of mind, at Trevela, on the 24th December, 1659, and was buried in the chancel of the church of Llangwmucha. His heavenly Father mercifully called him home just before the commencement of that long, dark, and stormy night of suffering which the restoration of the Stuarts brought upon the Nonconformists of England and Wales. It is supposed that his fears of the severities which he expected the churches would have to suffer, in consequence of the Restoration, hastened his death.

He was once married, and had two daughters, named Lois

¹ "Those professors that were baptized before they went up" were members of the church at Bristol. They had been converted to Anti-Pedobaptist views by Mr. John Canne in 1640. It does not appear that any of the Welsh Nonconformists were of that persuasion till the year 1649.

and Eunice. The elder was married to one Richard Creed, an English gentleman, and the younger to a Mr. Thomas Jones, of Abergavenny; and had a son named Christopher Jones, who was an eminently religious man.

"In his person he is said to have been tall, pitted with the small-pox, and very robust, capable of much hardship and fatigue; and such a constitution he had need of, to travel, so frequently and so long as he did, amidst the cold and barren mountains of Wales, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. In his temper he was affectionate, yet warm and hasty. In his judgment, moderate towards such as in lesser points differed from him, and informed better than most men in the controversies of the times he lived in."¹

His works, which were all published in his lifetime, are contained in one thick quarto volume. They are decidedly evangelical, and evince throughout the superior talents of the author as a popular preacher, and his gentleness and freedom from bigotry against those who were not agreed with him in non-essentials. Richard Baxter, who in 1635 thought very highly of him, in 1684 had so changed his opinion as to charge him with "gross Antinomianism." His being an Independent, his constant advocacy of unrestricted toleration to all sects and parties, and his rather high Calvinistic sentiments, sometimes, perhaps, expressed in incautious terms, were sufficient to make Baxter's mind too prejudiced against him to give a fair representation of his views. He was as far as Baxter himself from Antinomianism. We have not been able to find that Mr. Cradock published anything in the Welsh language, excepting, in connection with others, two or three editions of the Scriptures.

Our illustrious countryman's advanced views of religious liberty, and his unflinching advocacy of the rights of conscience, irritated, beyond measure, some of the narrow-minded Presbyterians of the day. The following quotation from an abusive work, entitled "Gangræna," by Thomas Edwards, an intolerant Presbyterian, designed of course to damage Mr. Cradock's

¹ "Trysorfa Ysbrydol" for 1799, p. 173. Also the Preface to Cradock's Works, p. 6.

character, will be considered in the present day as the highest compliment which could have been paid him:—"Lately he preached on that text in Thames Street, *We are not of the night, but of the day*; when he delivered matter to this effect: that since the apostles' times, or presently after, there had been a great night; but now the day was breaking out after a long night, and light was coming every day more than other; and there were many gospel privileges; and of the New Jerusalem, that we should then enjoy. In that day *there should be no ordinances to punish men for holding opinions*; there should be no confessions of faith; there every one should have the liberty of their consciences, as in Micah it is prophesied of those gospel times, 'All people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God, for ever and ever;' which place was brought by him for liberty of conscience; and in that day neither episcopacy, nor presbytery, nor any others, should intermeddle or invade the rights of the saints. Many such flings he had; and this sermon was preached just at the time when the ordinance against heresies was taken into debate, and the confession of faith to be brought into the House of Commons; so that, by these and many more particulars, his frequent hints about dipping, and suffering such show what are the first fruits of these itinerary preachers, and what a sad thing it is, that men so principled should go among such people as the Welsh, *with so large a power of preaching as he and his fellows have.*"¹ The Welsh people have had, for ages, cause to bless God "that men so principled" were sent to them.

Mr. Cradock was called twice to preach before the Parliament. In the year 1653, he was appointed by the Parliament to be one of the committee for the approbation of public preachers, commonly called *tryers*. He was, in the estimation of his contemporaries, a man of high reputation, and of great weight of character.

"Mr. Cradock, however despised by Mr. Baxter, was a man of very quick and pregnant natural parts, which, it is true, his many avocations too much kept him from cultivating and

¹ "Gangræna," part iii. p. 163. 1646.

improving—a man that had a wonderful faculty of coming down and bringing with him the things of God to the meanest of his auditors; and a man for whose very successful labours the mountains of Wales praise Almighty goodness. He sent many to heaven, where he himself also is, I doubt not, and where we leave him, out of the reach of detraction and calumny.”¹

MARMADUKE MATTHEWS was the son of Matthew Matthews, of Swansea. He was born in the year 1606. On the 20th of February, 1624, he matriculated at All Souls College, Oxford. We are not informed where he first settled after leaving the University; but, as we have seen, he was Vicar of Penmain, near Swansea, in 1636, and “preaching against the keeping of all holy-days, with divers other, as fond or profane opinions.” When proceedings were instituted against him in the Court of High Commission, he fled to New England. Where and how he spent his time during his sojourn there we know not; but some time after the subjugation of the Cavaliers in Wales, he returned from America, and was appointed the minister of the parish of St. John’s, Swansea, from which place he was ejected in the year 1662.

“He left a good living for conscience’ sake, though he had nothing else to subsist upon. He afterwards preached, by connivance of the magistrates, in a little chapel at the end of the town. He was a very pious and zealous man, who went about to instruct the people from house to house. Almost all his discourse was about spiritual matters. He made no visits but such as were properly ministerial, and received none but in a religious manner. When any came to visit him, after the common salutations, he would soon enter into some discourse about Divine things; and when anything was brought to drink, it was his custom to take the glass into his hand, give solemn thanks to God, and drink to his friend, telling him he was heartily welcome. He would often go out on market days to the country people, and speak to them about spiritual concerns; some of whom received him with respect, and others with contempt and scorn. He lived above the world, and

¹ “A Winding Sheet for Mr. Baxter’s Dead,” p. 6.

depended wholly upon Providence for the support of himself and his family. He subsisted by the piety of his children (of whom two or three were sober conformists), and by the kindness of relations and friends; which made him sometimes pleasantly say, 'He was comfortably maintained by the children of God, his own children, and the children of the world.' His way of preaching and catechizing had some peculiarities, but such as became *him*, and were of advantage to many. He lived to a good old age, and continued useful to the last. He died about 1683."¹

RICHARD SYMONDS, son of Thomas Symonds, of Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, was born in the year 1609. He was most probably converted in his youth, under Mr. Wroth's ministry. On the 18th of February, 1627, he matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford. In 1635, he was keeping a school at Shrewsbury, and had among his pupils the afterwards celebrated Richard Baxter.² It does not appear that Mr. Symonds remained long at Shrewsbury after 1635, for we find his name in the "Broadmead Records," p. 9, as one of "the reforming ministers of South Wales," who occasionally went over to Bristol, from 1633 to 1640, to preach to the religious people there. We have not been able to find whether Mr. Symonds held a living in South Wales at this time, or whether, like his friend Cradock, he traversed the country to preach wherever he could. When the war broke out, he fled with his brethren to England. Edwards, in his "Gangræna," part iii. pp. 241-2, says that he was beneficed at Sandwich, in Kent, during the civil wars. That scurrilous writer styles him "a great Independent, and a great sectary." He also gives us the following account of him: "There is one Mr. Symonds, a great sectary, who came to London since the wars, and preached at Little Allhallows, Thames Street, and at the Tower, where I have been informed that he hath preached several strange things: as, for *toleration*, and liberty for all men to worship God *according to their consciences*, and in favour of *Anti-Pedobaptism*. Also, preaching once at Andrew's, Undershaft, for Mr. Goodwin,

¹ Calamy's "Account," vol. ii. p. 732. 1713.

² Baxter's "Catholic Communion Defended," p. 28.

he preached high strains of Antinomianism : as, that Christ was a legal preacher, and lived in a dark time, and so preached the law, but afterwards the gospel came to be preached. Afterwards, preaching at Lawrence Poultney, on the day of thanksgiving for taking Sherborn Castle, he spake of the great victories the saints, meaning the Independents, had obtained ; and yet the Parliament was now making laws against these saints. As at London he hath preached thus, so since he left London, this last summer (1646), he preached at Bath, before the General, strange stuff, viz., against Presbytery, saying it was a limb of Antichrist, pleading for liberty of conscience, and for those who would not have their children baptized till they came to years of understanding, and for weavers and ignorant mechanics preaching, when he spake of these men's gifts, and their having the Spirit before learned men, and men bred at Universities, with a great deal of this stuff. It is a sad thing that Sir Thomas Fairfax, that valiant and well-affected gentleman, should have such kind of chaplains and preachers upon all occasions to preach before him. I have spoken the more of this Mr. Symonds, because I hear he is nominated one of the itinerary preachers of Wales ; that so the country and ministers may be aware of him ; and that the Assembly, when he comes to be approved of, may do their duties, and not let him pass so easily as they did Mr. Cradock." Edwards prefers the charges of Antinomianism, and of throwing out "frequent hints about dipping and suffering such," against Cradock as well as Symonds. His charges against the one are as groundless as against the other. Both were high Calvinists, but not Antinomians. They were also advocates for full liberty to the slandered and persecuted Anti-Pedobaptists, while disagreeing with their views on baptism.

When Mr. Symonds was approved of by the Assembly of Divines, in 1646, to be an itinerant preacher in Wales, he returned there, where he continued to exercise his ministry as long as he lived. He was one of the approvers, in the Act of 1649, for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. The last reference to him which we have met with is in Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," part ii. p. 301, where he is sneer-

ingly represented as assisting his brother, Edmund Ellis, of St. Fagan's, near Cardiff, to get the tithes from the parishioners, by preaching from Mal. iii. 10. This probably occurred in 1654 or 1655. He died some time before the Restoration, but where and when we know not.

AMBROSE MOSTYN, son of Dr. Henry Mostyn, of Calcott, in Flintshire, was born in the year 1610. He matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford, on the 15th of January, 1629. Immediately, or soon after completing his course at the University, he settled in South Wales; whether as the incumbent of a living, or as an itinerant Nonconformist preacher, we are not informed. His name is mentioned in the "Broadmead Records" as one of the reforming ministers of South Wales, between 1633 and 1640. We do not know what brought him to South Wales, unless it was his intimacy with Cradock, Symonds, and other pious young men from that part of the Principality, whose acquaintance he might have formed at the University. Dr. Calamy's statement, that "when he came from the University he preached for some time in connection with Mr. Powell, at Redcastle, in Montgomeryshire," is evidently incorrect; for Mr. Vavasor Powell, when Mr. Mostyn left the University, was not above sixteen years of age. It is possible that he preached there in connection with *Mr. Cradock*, who, during his stay at Sir Robert Harley's, often visited Montgomeryshire. We know nothing of Mr. Mostyn's history during the civil wars. The probability is that he took refuge in London, or some part of England. On the restoration of peace, he was actively engaged as an itinerant preacher in Wales.

It is said that he was once preaching in the churchyard of the parish of Aberystroth, Monmouthshire, and that after he had read his text—John v. 25—some of the crowd began to disturb the meeting, especially the members of one wealthy family in the parish. Taking down some dead hedgehogs, which were hung in the yew trees, they violently threw them at the preacher with fiendish laughter. Upon this Mr. Mostyn and the serious portion of the congregation withdrew to Gellygrug, a farmhouse about two miles distant, where he had quiet to preach to attentive hearers. On leaving the churchyard, one

Catherine Price told the disturbers, weeping, "It is very likely that you have this day rejected what shall never be offered to you again." Those persecutors were afterwards observed to be under the frowns of Providence for many years.¹ Mr. Mostyn was one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. He fixed his usual residence at Holt, in Denbighshire, during the interregnum. In 1659, he succeeded the celebrated Morgan Lloyd at Wrexham, and the following year had to give way to the sequestered minister. He was twice married, but had no children. His first wife died July 26, 1651, and is buried in the Nonconformists' burying-ground, in Swinney Park, near Oswestry. His second wife was daughter of Sir E. Broughton, Bart. On his departure from Wrexham, he became domestic chaplain to the pious Lord Saye and Sele, and was, together with his wife, entertained by that nobleman at his seat in Oxfordshire, where they were treated with much respect. On his lordship's death he preached his funeral sermon, and soon after removed to London, where he lived with Mr. Johnson, a Nonconformist minister, and there he died, about 1666.

"Mr. Mostyn was generally esteemed a good scholar, and remarkably humble, mortified, and pious; but was inclined to melancholy. In his younger days, when he was assistant to another minister, some good people, in his hearing, ascribing their conversion, under God, to that minister's preaching, he seemed dejected, as if he were of no use; when a sensible countryman present, who had a particular value for his ministry, made this observation for his encouragement: 'An ordinary workman may hew down timber, but it must be an accomplished artist that shall frame it for the building.' Mr. Mostyn, upon this, rose up, and cheerfully replied, 'If I am of any use, I am satisfied.' Indeed, his preaching was always solid and judicious, and highly esteemed by all but himself, but was especially useful to grown Christians. He was noted for a happy way of explaining and improving difficult texts, and was much against unpremeditated sermons. He showed a very tender spirit to any in distress. His last wife, though eminent for piety,

¹ Jones's "History of Aberystroth," pp. 93-4. 1779.

was exercised with great trouble of mind, in which he was a successful comforter. He was inclined to heat in his temper, but was the first to censure himself for it. He had but a small income of his own, and yet was very charitable. In those times, when so many worthy men were in lower circumstances than himself, he was unwilling to receive the bounty of his friends, and said he would not eat the bread out of poor men's mouths. He had an agreeable address, which, with his great abilities, recommended him to persons of rank, who were no friends to Nonconformity; yet he delighted to converse with poor Christians, and had a very happy turn for profitable conversation with them. He used a familiar way of starting practical questions, that would either set people a-thinking themselves, or make them eagerly attentive to his own instructions. He was sorely afflicted with the stone many years. The Lord's day before his last long illness he preached on these words: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."¹

HENRY WALTER was the second son of John Walter, Esq., of Persfield, or Piercefield Park, near Chepstow, Monmouthshire. He was born in the year 1611, and was educated at Jesus College, Oxford, where he matriculated April 12, 1633. It appears that his first charge was the perpetual curacy of Mynyddislwyn, near Newport, Monmouthshire. He is also named in the "Broadmead Records" as one of the reforming ministers of South Wales, who were accustomed to go over to Bristol to preach. Mr. Walter, and probably several of the members of his church, accompanied Mr. Cradock and the brethren from Llanvaches to Bristol and London, on the breaking out of the civil wars. In 1646 we find his name among those ministers from the church at Allhallows the Great, London, who were sent by the Parliament to be itinerant preachers in Wales. From this time to the Restoration he devoted his time entirely to preaching the gospel in the Principality. Monmouthshire and the eastern part of Glamorganshire were the districts where he laboured chiefly. Dr. Walker says that he received salary in both counties. If he did, he deserved it better than many. He was a very popular and diligent preacher, and people flocked

¹ Calamy's "Account," vol. ii. pp. 714-15.

rom distant parts to hear him.¹ His name is the first among the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. On the Restoration, he was ejected from St. Woolos, Newport. In 1669 he resided at Park-y-Pill in the parish of Caerleon, and is described as a teacher in several conventicles regularly held in that and other neighbouring localities. We have not been able to ascertain the time of his death. He was living in the year 1675.²

ROBERT POWELL was the son of a gentleman of Shropshire.³ He was born in the year 1599, and was educated at Hart Hall, Oxford. The date of his matriculation is October 25, 1616. He became Vicar of Cadoxton, near Neath, Glamorganshire, about 1622, or soon after. We have no proof that he was a Nonconformist previous to the civil wars, but he was an evangelical clergyman, and a diligent and gifted preacher of the gospel. It is said that he was an intimate friend of the celebrated Rees Prichard, Vicar of Llandovery, and that he determinedly opposed the reading of the "Book of Sports." Mr. Charles, of Bala, says that he died in 1640;⁴ but that is evidently incorrect, for his name is among the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, in 1649. He died some time before the Restoration, but where and when we know not.

A small number of young men, besides the foregoing, such as Vavasor Powell, Jenkin Jones, Morgan Lloyd, David ap Hugh, &c., were beginning to exercise their gifts as Nonconformist preachers a year or two before the war; but their lives and labours will more properly come under our notice in the next chapter. Of Roberts, the Welsh lecturer in the diocese of St. David's mentioned by Laud, in his account of his province for the years 1634 and 1635, we have not been able to collect any information. A Mr. Roberts is named in the pamphlet entitled "The Parliament Explained to Wales," as labouring successfully, in connection with Mr. Powell, in 1646,

¹ Jones's "History of Aberystroth," p. 96.

² "Broadmead Records," p. 516.

³ It should be observed that the Welsh was the vernacular language of some districts of the counties of Salop and Hereford in the seventeenth century.

⁴ "Trysorfa Ysbrydol" for 1799, pp. 322-3.

to evangelize the district about Llangyrug, on the borders of the counties of Radnor and Montgomery. He was probably the same person.

The first regularly organized Nonconformist church in Wales was formed in the month of November, 1639, at Llanvaches. The Rev. Henry Jessey, then pastor of the Independent church in Southwark, assisted in the formation of this church. In his "Life," published in 1671, pages 9, 10, we have the following statement:—"In November, 1639, he was sent into Wales by the congregation, for the assisting of old Mr. Wroth, Mr. Cradock, and others, in their gathering and constituting the church in Llanvaches, in South Wales, which afterwards was, like Antioch, the mother church in that Gentile country; being very famous for her officers, members, order, and gifts." Thus the minister of the first Independent church in England was present, as a deputation from his people, at the formation of the first Independent church in Wales.

Soon after the formation of the church at Llanvaches a second was formed at Mynyddislwyn, in the same county. Mr. Henry Walter "was the instrument to call most or all the original members thereof." This church, as well as that at Llanvaches, became very numerous, and several of its members eminent for their gifts and zeal in spreading the knowledge of the gospel throughout the country around. Both these original churches, after passing through the ordeal of bitter and violent persecutions, and the various changes of time, exist to this day.¹

William Erbery, whose ministry for several years had been eminently blessed to the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, was at this time beginning to imbibe peculiar notions respecting the nature of a Christian church, the ministry, &c. But not having yet gone to the length he afterwards went in his views on these subjects, he reluctantly consented to follow the example of Mr. Wroth, and the brethren at Llanvaches, by forming his friends at Cardiff into a regular church. In an address "To the scattered saints at Cardiff and the country thereabout," printed in the year 1653,

¹ Appendix, C.

he gives us the following account of the formation of his church, and, in his opinion, the unhappy results of its formation:—
 “Beloved, I was first your preacher, then your pastor; and this last, not out of light in myself, but in love to the saints of Llanvaches, who, being then gathered into a new modelled church, never left me till I and mine came into the same form with them: so we walked, they in the light, because I believe that led them into fellowship; but I in darkness, because, contrary to my own light, in love only, as I said, I followed them, because I could not offend. But see the judgment of God; less love and more offences fell out between us, after we came into a brotherhood or combination of churches, than when we were at first a company of scattered saints. Well, gathered churches we must be, and so we were, till the sword scattered us all into England; there they of Llanvaches continued with their pastor, teacher, and ruling elder.”¹

Mr. Ambrose Mostyn was also instrumental in gathering a church at Swansea.² This church, too, was evidently formed before the civil wars; for Mr. Mostyn, on his return to the Principality after the wars, settled in North Wales. Whether the societies at Mynyddislwyn, Cardiff, and Swansea, were then considered as distinct churches, or merely branches of the mother church at Llanvaches, we are not able to determine. When they had scarcely existed two years, the wars broke out, and they were again scattered for some years.

The Welsh Nonconformists of this period were most numerous in the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan; but there were also small numbers in different parts of the counties of Brecon,³ Radnor, Cardigan, Montgomery, and especially about Wrexham, in Denbighshire. These were not formed into churches until after the wars. And a number of pious men, converted chiefly under the powerful ministry of the evangelical Vicar of Llandoverly, were scattered through several localities in the counties of Caermarthen and Pembroke. Most of these, after his death, became Nonconformists.

¹ Erbery's "Testimony," p. 162.

² "Broadmead Records," p. 514.

³ Jones's "History of Breconshire," vol. i. p. 224.

The Parliament, generally denominated "The Long Parliament," which met on the third day of November, 1640, began immediately to oppose and counteract the tyrannical and popish proceedings of the King and his adviser, Laud. Many of the oppressed Puritans were liberated from prison, and a large number of the silenced ministers throughout the kingdom were again permitted to preach. The persecuted Nonconformist ministers of Wales, amongst others, were encouraged in their pious efforts to evangelize their countrymen. In the journals of the House of Commons, vol. ii. p. 189, we find the following entry:—"June 26th, 1641. The humble petition of certain ministers of Wales authorized by a committee of this honourable House to preach where there was want of preaching: *Walter Craddock*, one of them that subscribed the petition, was called in, and did avow the petition; and it is *ordered*, that this petition be referred to the Committee for Scandalous Ministers, where Mr. Corbet hath the chair. And it is likewise *ordered*, that the parties complained of in that petition be summoned to appear before that committee." From this entry it appears that Mr. Walter Craddock and his brethren were authorized by the Parliament to preach in Wales some months, at least, previous to the 26th of June, 1641, and that they had been opposed by some parties, which opposition was evidently the occasion of the petition. In the same journals, for September 8th, 1641, we have this resolution: "*Ordered*, that it shall be lawful for the parishioners of any parish in the kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales, to set up a lecture, and to maintain an orthodox minister, at their own charge, to preach every Lord's day, where there is no preaching, and to preach one day in every week, where there is no weekly lecture."

How far these liberal proceedings of the Parliament affected the condition of the Nonconformists of Wales, and the state of religion there at that time, we are not able to determine. The number of evangelical ministers in the Principality, both Conformists and Nonconformists, was exceedingly small—scarcely amounting to one for each county; and the clergy and gentry, with very rare exceptions, were most bitterly hostile to

Puritanism in any shape, but especially where it was in the least degree tinged with Nonconformity. They therefore opposed its progress by every and any means, notwithstanding the favourable disposition of the Parliament. However, amidst all these disadvantages, some good was done; and, amongst other good things, the publication of an elegant edition of the New Testament in the Welsh language, in the year 1641, is worthy to be recorded. Previous to this it does not appear that there were, in the whole country, above two or three copies of the Word of God for each parish. That our nation is indebted for this boon to the few persecuted and despised Nonconformist ministers of the time, there cannot be the least doubt. The printer's name is not inserted—a certain proof that it was printed without authority.

Early in the year 1642 the breach between the King and the Parliament resulted in an open war. This was a most critical time for the Welsh Nonconformists. They naturally sympathized with the Parliament, while the mass of the nation, especially the clergy and gentry, being grossly superstitious, and the deadly enemies of evangelical religion, as a matter of course, violently defended the royal cause. The Nonconformists, therefore, had no choice but to sacrifice their principles by fighting against the Parliament; to remain in the country to be mercilessly butchered by the Cavaliers; or to flee to England for refuge, leaving their elderly people, wives, children, and property to the care of Providence. They wisely adopted this last course, and thus saved their lives without violating their principles.





CHAPTER II.

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CIVIL WARS TO THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY, A.D. 1642-1662.

The Civil War—Characters of the Parties engaged in it—Many Welsh Nonconformists escaping to England—The Sufferings of those who remained in Wales during the War—Their Activity and Success in Propagating the Gospel—The Ministers returning from England—Spiritual Destitution of the Country—Promising Aspect of Things—The Welsh Testament published—Opposition of the Episcopal Clergy—The Second Civil War—Increase of Ministers—The Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales—Conformists joining Nonconformists to work out its Provisions—Dr. Walker on the Sufferings of the Clergy—Character of his Work—Degraded Character of the Clergy ejected by the Commissioners—Opposition raised against the Commissioners—The Petition of South Wales—Number of the Ejected Clergy—Character of the Itinerant Preachers—V. Powell's Account of the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales—Rise of the Anti-Pedobaptist in Wales—Public Discussion on Baptism at Abergavenny—V. Powell Re-baptized—Rise of the Quakers in Wales—Unhappy Effects of Religious Division—V. Powell and his Party oppose Cromwell, W. Cradock defends him—Persecution Revived at the Restoration—Sketches of Vavasor Powell, Morgan Lloyd, Jenkin Jones, John Myles, Hugh Evans, David Walters, Richard Powell, Morris Bidwell, Jenkin Lloyd, A.M., Evan Bowen.



NOTHING can be more contrary to the truth than the statement of a certain class of historians which represents the Civil War in the reign of Charles I. as the attack of the Nonconformists upon the Established Church. The Parliament, at the commencement of the contest, consisted exclusively of professed Conformists, and it does not appear that any of its members had then the least intention of effecting any radical change in the constitution of either the Church or the State; but circumstances soon forced them to adopt extreme measures, which they had never dreamed of at the

outset. The nation was divided into two great and antagonistic parties, denominated Royalists and Parliamentarians, not Conformists and Nonconformists. The diametrically opposite character and avowed principles of those parties at once account for the fact, that the Nonconformists throughout the kingdom sided with the Parliament rather than with the King. An honest and unprejudiced historian gives us the following account of the parties :—" In this contest between King and Parliament, the generality of the nobility were on the King's side. After *Edgehill* fight, when the King was at Oxford, a great part of the *Lords*, and many of the *Commons*, went over to him. A great part of the knights and gentlemen of England adhered to him, except in *Middlesex, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Cambridgeshire*, where the King never came with his army. Most of their tenants followed them, and most of the poorer sort of people throughout the nation. On the Parliament side were the smaller part of the gentry in most counties, and the greatest part of the tradesmen and freeholders, and the middle sort of men, especially in those corporations and counties which depend on clothing and such manufactures. To them also adhered the far greater part of those through the nation who were friends to a *religious strictness*, and enemies to *formality and profaneness, superstition and immorality*. It was not, indeed, properly *Bellum episcopale*, the Bishops' War, though by many so styled ; for thousands that wished for *good bishops* were on the Parliament side. But the generality of those who were called *Puritans* and *Precisians* and were for serious godliness, both ministers and people, adhered to the Parliament. On the other side, they who were for *looseness, swearing, gaming, and drinking* ; the ministers and people who were against the strict observation of the *Lord's day*, and fond of dancing and recreations at those sacred seasons, that placed all their *religion* in going to *church* and hearing *common prayer*, that were against serious preaching, and for running down all those who were stricter than themselves,—these adhered all along to the King, which one consideration was the thing that determined many sober and honest persons which side to take. But that which, upon the whole, was the great cause of the Parliament's strength, and the King's ruin, was that the de-

bauched rabble through the land, emboldened by his gentry, and seconded by the common soldiers of his army, took all that were called *Puritans* for their enemies; and though some of the King's gentry and superior officers were so civil, that they would do no such thing, yet that was no security to the country, while the multitude did what they list. So that if any one was noted for a strict and famous preacher, or for a man of a pious life, he was either plundered or abused, and in danger of his life. And if a man did but pray in his family, or were but heard to repeat a sermon, or sing a psalm, they presently cried out, *Rebels, Round-heads*, and all their money and goods that were portable proved guilty, how innocent soever they were themselves. This was it that filled the armies and garrisons of the Parliament with sober, pious men. Thousands had no mind to meddle with the wars, but greatly desired to live peaceably at home, when the rage of the soldiers and drunkards would not suffer them. Some stayed till they had been imprisoned; some till they had been plundered twice or thrice over, and had nothing left them; some were quite tired out with the abuse of all comers that quartered on them, and some by the insolency of their neighbours. But most were afraid of their lives, and so sought refuge in the Parliament's garrisons." ¹

As almost all the clergy, the gentry, and the people generally throughout Wales, were violent Royalists, the Nonconformists, who were comparatively few in number, and scattered over extensive districts of the counties of Monmouth, Glamorgan, Brecon, Radnor, and Denbigh, had nothing but death, in its most cruel form, to expect at the breaking out of the war, if they remained in the country. The ministers, and as many of the members of their churches as could do so, fled for refuge to England. Bristol being at that time in possession of the Parliament's army, they fled there by night, where they remained until that city was surrendered to the Royalists, on the 26th of July, 1643. Having been robbed of their property, they narrowly escaped with their lives to London. Most of the ministers from Wales, during their stay in England, were actively engaged in preaching the gospel. Mr. Cradock became pastor of a con-

¹ Baxter's "Life and Times," by Calamy, vol. i. pp. 46-52. Ed. 1713.

gregation at Allhallows the Great, London. Here he delivered the sermons which comprise the thick quarto volume known as "Walter Cradock's Works." Those members of his church who had followed him to London attended his ministry there. Mr. Richard Symonds settled for some time at Sandwich, in Kent; and Mr. Vavasor Powell at Dartford, in Kent, where he exercised his ministry with remarkable acceptance and success for two years and six months. We have not been able to ascertain where the other ministers were located.

Our information in regard to the condition and sufferings of those Welsh Nonconformists who were unable to escape to England at the breaking out of the war is very scanty. That they were great sufferers is beyond doubt. Vavasor Powell tells us that their goods and cattle were seized upon by their adversaries, and that their wives and children were necessitated to live in distress and danger till the war was over. We are also informed that Prince Rupert, in his expedition through Wales, "drove away the people's cattle, rifled their houses, and spoiled their standing corn; that aged and unarmed people were stripped—some murdered in cold blood, and others half hanged and burnt, and yet suffered to live."¹ Inasmuch as the mass of the Welsh people of all classes were Royalists, who then but the poor Nonconformists could have been subjected to that cruel treatment? Yet, notwithstanding their great dangers, privations, and sufferings, these good people not only adhered immoveably to their principles, but also traversed the country to make known the way of salvation to their fellow-countrymen. When the ministers returned to the Principality, after the war, they found that religion had made remarkable progress during their absence, through the humble instrumentality of these sufferers. Mr. Cradock, in a sermon which he delivered in London, and which was published in the year 1648, referring to this astonishing work of grace, says: "I use not to tell stories, but let me tell this one thing. Since I have been from you of late I have observed, and seen, in the mountains of Wales, the most glorious work that I ever saw in England, unless it were in London. The gospel is run over the mountains between Brecknockshire and

¹ Neal's "Puritans," vol. iii.

Monmouthshire, as the fire in the thatch. And who should do this? They have no ministers; but some of the wisest say that there are about *eight hundred* godly people there, and they go from one to another. They have no ministers, it is true; if they had, they would honour them, and bless God for them. And shall we rail at such, and say they are tub-preachers, and they were never at the University? Let us all fall down and honour God: what if God will honour Himself that way? They are filled with good news, and they tell it to others; and therefore vex not at them, and say, What times are these? and what will become of us? Why, what is the matter? Oh, such a man, he was never a Master of Arts, he was never at the University, and he takes upon himself to preach;—when it may be he hath more of God in him than I, and a hundred that have all this.”¹

The spiritual destitution of the nation at this time was most lamentable. Mr. W. Cradock, in his sermon before the Parliament, on the 21st of July, 1646, says: “Oh, let not poor Wales continue sighing, famishing, mourning, and bleeding, while you have your days of feasting, rejoicing, thanksgiving, and praising God. Oh, how loath I am to mention it to you! Is it not a sad case, that in thirteen counties there should not be above thirteen (God grant there be more! I know not so many) conscientious ministers, who in these times expressed themselves firmly and constantly faithful to the Parliament, and formerly preached profitably in the Welsh language twice every Lord’s day? Yet, praised be our God, some few there are, though I myself am unworthy to be reckoned amongst them, who are ready and willing to spend and be spent for the glory of God and the good of their country.” Mr. V. Powell, in the preface to his Scripture Catechism, published in the year 1646, says,—“Having finished this little Catechism in English, it is translated into Welsh for my dear and soul-hungering countrymen, who have not to my knowledge any, excepting one (if one), of this nature, nay, far worse, have not of godly, able Welsh ministers, one for a county, nor one Welsh Bible for five hundred families; although in some parts, where the Gospel came, they far

¹ Cradock’s “Glad Tidings,” p. 50.

and near pressed unto it night and day, by violence took it, and through tribulations were followers of it. They are not so soul-full but they will prize the least crumb herein, and the rather because it is only the Scripture which they diligently learn and examine. Couldst thou hear their groans for Bibles and teachers, and see their grace and growth without them, thou wouldest by thy prayers, purse, persuasions, and power, endeavour to supply them forthwith. If thou readest no farther, yet remember Wales' spiritual wants."

The Parliament once more turned its attention to this sad state of things. On the 15th of August, 1645, it was "Ordered, that out of the lands of the bishops, deans, and chapters of Llandaff and St. David's, there be three hundred pounds per annum allowed and paid unto Mr. Henry Walter, Mr. Richard Symonds, and Mr. Walter Cradock, ministers, during the pleasure of the House, equally to be divided between them, viz.:—one hundred pounds per annum to each, towards their maintenance in the work of the ministry in South Wales." July 22nd, 1646, "An ordinance for constituting Mr. Richard Symonds, Henry Walter, and Walter Cradock, ministers, to preach itinerantly in the several counties of South Wales, and for allowing each of them one hundred pounds per annum out of the rents and revenues of the deans, deans and chapters, and prebends of St. David's and Llandaff, for their pains—and likewise for constituting a committee to sequester the said rents and revenues, and pay the said stipend to the said ministers out of them—was this day read; and, upon the question, passed, and ordered to be sent unto the Lords for their concurrence.

"Resolved, &c., that Mr. Recorder do prepare and bring in an ordinance for settling committees, for the better establishing the affairs of North Wales, for putting the ordinances of Parliament into execution, and for settling a preaching ministry there; and for taking care of providing maintenance for them; and for sending down ministers that may be able to preach in the Welsh tongue; and for appointing a standing committee to take notice of, and overview the actions of, the several committees of those counties; and to consider of members of this

House to go into those counties ; and to prepare instructions for them.

"October 28th, 1646, Ordered, that Mr. Cradock, Mr. Symonds, and Mr. Walter, who were formerly appointed to go into Wales, to preach the gospel there, do, with all convenient speed, proceed thither, according to the former appointment ; and that the former allowance ordered to be paid to them for their pains be now paid unto them by the committee of the revenue." ¹

About the close of this year the forementioned ministers and a few others entered the field, with zeal and a holy determination to take possession of it in the name of their God.

It appears that the gross immorality of many of the clergy, the utter inefficiency of most of them, the heavy expenses of the late war, which had greatly impoverished all classes, and the brutal conduct of the Cavaliers, had so disgusted a large portion of the nation, that they longed for a change. Even the most conscientious Royalists, who had the least degree of patriotism and religious feeling, deemed it their duty to assist the Parliamentarians to take possession of the country, rather than leave it to be utterly ruined by the King's debauched soldiers.²

The banished evangelists, therefore, on their return found the fields to a great extent white to the harvest. This encouraging state of things is thus most feelingly and gratefully referred to in a pamphlet already quoted, entitled, "The Parliament explained to Wales :"—"If we mark, we may see His greatest favour, His gospel coming among us. The Bible, before only known in the church volume, hath, by means of worthy Sir Thomas Middleton, been printed in a neat, portable volume.

¹ "Journals of the House of Commons," vol. iv. pp. 242, 622, 707.

² Phillips's "Life of Archbishop Williams," pp. 300-2. "This day also, letters came, which certified that Dr. Williams, *quondam* Archbishop of York, hath deserted the King's party, and is come from Conway, and gone to his own house at Penrhyn, which he hath fortified and put into a garrison, sending to the country, that they should pay no more taxes to the King's party, who hath deluded them all this while ; for now he saith, his conscience is clearly convinced that the Parliament is in the right. You may see that the prosperity and successes wherewith God hath blessed the Parliament may reduce many stubborn, stout men."—*The Weekly Intelligencer* of April 30, 1646.

And now again, I hear Mr. Cradock is procuring the New Testament to be printed in Welsh, in a little volume, whereby it may grow more portable and common; which may be of much use, in a short time, to introduce the knowledge of the gospel among us. In some places of Wales, the gospel doth already kindle; and that—which our counties can never too gratefully acknowledge—by the worthy and godly endeavour of Mr. Cradock; and especially, which is worth our notice, it begins to shine in a place heretofore noted for untowardness, called Llangyrug, in Montgomeryshire, a place formerly of very sorry fame, but now pointed at as the Puritans and Round-heads of Wales; and all this through the godly pains of some persecuted ministers (Mr. Powell and Mr. Roberts) resorting thither through manifold discouragements and dangers.

“And, blessed be the Lord, we never had more hopes and fairer means offering themselves than now. As when we see stone, timber, and other materials gathered together to a place, we presently conclude that there is some building in hand; so, by what you have read, methinks now the Lord doth no less than seem to provide means, and as it were materials, to rear up His gospel among us. And as the blind man in the Gospel is said to behold men walking as trees, some such obscure sight, methinks, we may already have of the gospel’s silent approach and motion towards us. And as at the famine of Samaria, Elijah said to Ahab,—‘*There is a sound of abundance of rain,*’ so, after this great famine of the Word, blessed be God, we do now at last, as it were, ken a little cloud rising like a man’s hand, and that erewhile the heavens will grow black with clouds and wind, and we shall have a great rain, and the Lord of the harvest will give a plentiful increase. Doubtless, if we be not wanting to ourselves through our wilfulness and ingratitude, God hath some great favours in store for us.”

In the years 1646 and 1647, two editions of the New Testament in the Welsh language were published. It is supposed that they amounted to above three thousand copies; and, according to the foregoing statement, the Welsh nation was indebted to Mr. Cradock for that invaluable boon.

Though the aspect of things in the Principality at this time

was upon the whole favourable and encouraging, still the evangelists had to work their way through many obstructions and difficulties, and to cross the paths of men who were determined enemies to them and their work. The immoral clergy, and their friends among the gentry, did all in their power to frustrate the labours of the itinerants ; but, having been deprived of the power they possessed before the war to imprison them, they now adopted other plans, such as slandering their characters, fabricating blasphemous stories respecting their sermons, and inciting the mob to disturb the meetings.¹

The second civil war, in the year 1648, which first broke out in South Wales, under Major-General Laugharne, and Colonels Poyer and Powell, threw the country once more into confusion ; and, of course, for some time interrupted the work of evangelization. Mr. Cradock, Mr. V. Powell, and probably several other ministers, fled to England again ; but as soon as Cromwell succeeded in reducing the Royalists, and restoring peace, they returned to their country and work.

The number of able and evangelical ministers in the Principality had by this time considerably increased. In consequence of the altered state of the country, and in consideration of its deplorable spiritual destitution, some Welshmen, who held livings in England, were induced to return to Wales. Several pious young men from the Universities were also ordained about this time ; and twenty or more of the members of the churches of Llanvaches and Mynyddislwyn, who during the war, and in the absence of the ministers, had opportunities to exercise their gifts as public speakers, were now encouraged to become regular itinerant preachers. But after all it might have been properly said, that the labourers were but few in comparison to the extent of the field.

It has already been stated that the ministers who returned from England at the close of the first civil war were commissioned by the Parliament to preach wherever they thought proper in Wales. The Nonconformists of that age, with rare exceptions, were not so advanced in their views of religious

¹ See Alexander Griffiths' various pamphlets, and Vavasor Powell's replies to them.

liberty as to object to all interference of Parliament with religious matters. They therefore hesitated not to receive their commission to preach from the Legislature, and to be supported by State payments, instead of the free contributions of their congregations. Their conduct in this matter must appear glaringly inconsistent to every enlightened Nonconformist of the present age. While they held, as we do, that none should be admitted to church membership but professedly converted men, it appears astonishing that they did not perceive the injustice of taxing the unconverted multitude towards their support, as the chosen pastors of the converted few. William Erbery, with all his mental aberrations, was far in advance of his contemporaries on this point. "Since," he says, "the Independent pastors are turned parsons, and the preachers of the gospel parish priests, the burden of tithes hath been more oppressive in them than in the prelates and presbyters heretofore. These were national ministers, and did service to every parish in the nation ; therefore the national maintenance was more of right proper for them. But the Independent pastors, separating from the nation, and professing a gospel practice, cannot for shame deny their own principles as to keep up tithes, but rather to look for a maintenance from their own churches, or to live of the gospel, if they preach to the world. I say of the gospel ; that is, to live by faith in God, who will doubtless feed His servants, and cause men freely to contribute unto them who preach the gospel freely." ¹ However, we should bless the Lord for enabling ministers in that dark age to advance as far as they did, and to serve their generation so efficiently, notwithstanding their shortcomings in some points.

It appears that the Parliamentary Committee for Scandalous Ministers had deposed some clergymen in Wales from the year 1646 to 1649, who were malignants, or conspicuous and violent opposers of the Government of the day, or notoriously immoral. Large districts of the country were sadly destitute of the means of religious instruction ; and many clergymen, who still held livings, were worse than useless on account of their inefficiency or open immorality. The Parliament, therefore, on the 22nd

¹ Erbery's " Testimony," p. 54.

of February, 1649-50, passed an ordinance, entitled, "An Act for the better Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, and Redress of some Grievances." In this Act seventy-one gentlemen are named as Commissioners, and twenty-five ministers as approvers of public preachers. The Commissioners, or five or more of them, were empowered to eject clergymen or schoolmasters from their livings or places, if proved to be delinquent, scandalous, malignant, or non-resident; to induct to livings or schools, such preachers and schoolmasters as would be recommended to them by the approvers; to manage the profits of all sequestered livings, which they were to divide, as specified in the Act, between the wives and children of the ejected ministers, the approved preachers and schoolmaster, and the widows of godly ministers. As the Act is inserted, unabridged, in the Appendix,¹ it is needless to enlarge on its provisions here.

This Act at that time created considerable stir, and has been made a subject of the most scurrilous criticism by a certain class of writers in almost every subsequent age. The Commissioners certainly had a most unenviable task to perform; but those historians who endeavour to blacken their character, and magnify their real or supposed misdeeds, in order to disgrace the Nonconformists of that age, show that they are either ignorant of the circumstances of the case or wilfully malicious. Of the seventy-one Commissioners named in the Act, the majority were Royalists and Churchmen previous to the year 1646, and Conformists after the Restoration. Whatever disgrace, therefore, arises from their transactions, Conformists as well as Nonconformists must come in for their full share of it. If it should be alleged that those Conformists betrayed their principles by having anything to do with the Act, it may be replied that the Nonconformists who co-operated with them did the same.

If the Commissioners, both Conformists and Nonconformists, acted inconsistently with their principles in this matter, every well-informed and unprejudiced person must acknowledge that they did more, with all their inconsistencies, to promote religion and morality in the Principality in three years than all the clergy in the previous threescore years.

¹ See Appendix, Note D.

Dr. Walker, in his work on the "Sufferings of the Clergy," has devoted twenty-seven closely printed folio pages to vilify the character of the Commissioners, by representing them, and the ministers who acted with them, as base hypocrites, cruel oppressors, and dishonest villains. It would not be in keeping with the design of this work to quote and confute all the scurrilous and false statements of the Doctor; but inasmuch as he is from time to time referred to by some writers as an unquestionable authority, it would not be improper to state a few facts respecting the sources of his information. He acknowledges that he never saw a copy of the Act itself, nor any of the pamphlets published in favour of the Commissioners. He had access to the accounts of the "Propagators," as he calls them, which he found in a heap of loose, unsorted papers in the library of the archbishop, at Lambeth Palace; but he does not pretend to have examined even these with any particular care. His principal authorities are three pamphlets, entitled "Mercurius Cambro Britannicus; or, News from Wales Touching the Miraculous Propagation of the Gospel in those Parts," printed in the year 1652; "Strena Vavasoriensis: a New Year's Gift to the Welsh Itinerants; or, A Hue and Cry after Mr. Vavasor Powell," printed in the year 1654; and "A True and Perfect Relation of the whole Transaction concerning the Petition of the Six Counties of South Wales, and the County of Monmouth, formerly presented to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England for a Supply of Godly Ministers," 1654. The author of these pamphlets was Alexander Griffiths, A.M. This man appears to have been a person of considerable talents, and an accomplished scholar; but he was a most reprobate character. The bishop of the diocese had deposed him from two livings before the wars, on account of his immorality. In the year 1639 he got possession of the vicarage of Glasbury, in Breconshire, from which he was ejected on the 7th of June, 1650, by the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel, *for drunkenness and lasciviousness*.¹ His pamphlets contain the most bare-faced falsehoods, several horridly blasphemous stories, and

¹ Lambeth MSS. vol. 1027. Walker, part ii. p. 259.

many filthy and obscene expressions. Yet, notwithstanding all this, these disgusting productions were so highly valued by some of the Welsh gentry as late as the beginning of this century that, according to Jones, the historian of Breconshire, one of them was knocked down at a sale for eleven pounds! The high estimation in which Dr. Walker appears to have held Alexander Griffiths' writings, and the liberal use he made of them, do not speak very much in favour of either his regard for truth, his impartiality as a historian, or the delicacy of his moral feelings. Griffiths' slanderous statements were most ably confuted by a large number of magistrates and gentlemen of high standing in the different counties, in a large quarto pamphlet, published in 1654, entitled "*Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris.*" Dr. Walker never saw this, nor, according to his own admission, did he take any notice of the returns of the different sheriffs, which appeared to be favourable to the Act and the Commissions; while the returns of the sheriff of Breconshire and the Grand Jury of Montgomeryshire, who favoured the ejected clergy, are repeatedly quoted in his pages. From these facts the reader may judge what credit should be given to his tedious, confused, and one-sided account of the "*Propagation of the Gospel in Wales.*"

It appears that all the papers which Dr. Walker found at Lambeth Palace have long since been either lost or destroyed, with the exception of a few leaves; but one of these contains an entry which impugns his veracity. In the "*Sufferings of the Clergy,*" part ii. p. 338, one Theodore Price, who had been ejected from Cardiff and several other livings in Glamorgan-shire, is represented as having been treated with great cruelty, and even sought after to be hanged; but in the manuscript at Lambeth this very person is mentioned as receiving £50 a year for serving the parish of Cadoxton, in the Vale of Glamorgan. If all the accounts of the Commissioners had been preserved, the number of Dr. Walker's "*loyal and suffering clergy*" in Wales would most probably be found comparatively very small.

Of the clergy ejected by the Commissioners, some were alehouse-keepers, some were fornicators, many were notorious

drunkards, a large number were ignorant and inefficient, and others were malignants or avowed enemies of the Government. There might have been some good men amongst those designated as malignants ;¹ but while they had not the wisdom to be silent on political questions, the Commissioners could hardly be blamed for ejecting them, as the interference of the ministers of religion with politics in those unsettled times tended greatly to endanger the peace of the community.

Soon after the Act came in force the ejected clergy and their friends did all in their power to prejudice all classes, from the ignorant rabble in the country to the Parliament in London, against the Commissioners and the ministers who co-operated with them. On the 10th of March, 1651, a petition, stated to have been signed by 15,000 inhabitants of the six counties of South Wales, and the county of Monmouth, was presented to the Parliament. In this petition it was complained that the country was in a most deplorable state for want of regular

¹ It would be much more agreeable to one's feelings to be able to point out some worthy and useful ministers amongst those ejected by the Commissioners, than to be obliged to look upon the majority of them as either notoriously wicked or worthless characters, and upon the very best of the whole number as nothing better than respectable and well-educated gentlemen of a high social standing, but deficient of any remarkable ministerial qualification. In vain we examine Dr. Walker's list of the suffering clergy in Wales for a single individual of national celebrity as a powerful preacher or an eminently successful minister, such as Rees Prichard, of Llandoverly, in the seventeenth century, or Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, in the eighteenth. It affords us real pleasure to be able to select one from the list who appears to have been a good, earnest minister. His name is John Edwards. He was ejected from Tredynock, in Monmouthshire, and was the translator of the book entitled "The Marrow of Modern Divinity." In the Dedication prefixed to that work, dated July 20th, 1650, he states that he had been forbidden to exercise his ministry, and that he therefore endeavoured to serve his countrymen by presenting them with a translation of that book. This fact leads us to entertain a favourable opinion of Mr. Edwards' piety and desire to do good, whatever might have been the cause of his ejection ; for it is not at all probable that a wicked man would have taken the trouble of translating such an evangelical book as "The Marrow of Modern Divinity." We need not wonder that so many of the Welsh clergy were ejected for inefficiency, for we are informed by this Mr. Edwards that scarcely one in fifteen of his clerical contemporaries could read and write the Welsh language. To urge, as Dr. Walker repeatedly does, that many of them were Bachelors and Masters of Arts, and Doctors of Divinity, does not in the least prove their fitness to hold Welsh livings, while they were ignorant of the language of the people.

preaching ; that the Commissioners had embezzled the profits of the sequestered livings ; that many clergymen had been unjustly ejected ; and that the people were turning Papists and heathen. In the Journal of the House of Commons, vol. vii. p. 271, we have the following record respecting this petition : “Friday, the 25th of March, 1653. The humble petition of divers *well affected*, in South and North Wales, was this day read.

“Colonel Bennett reports from the Committee of Plundered Ministers, to whom the petition of the inhabitants of South Wales was referred. The Parliament having, by their order of the 10th of March, 1651, referred the petition, intituled ‘The Humble Petition of several of the Inhabitants of the six counties of South Wales, and the county of Monmouth, well affected to the Parliament and present Government, in the behalf of themselves and the rest of the inhabitants there,’ to the Committee of Plundered Ministers, to examine the business, and state the matter of fact, and report their opinions therein to the House, &c.

“The said petition and order were delivered to this Committee the said 10th day of March, 1651, and by them referred to the 16th of the said month, at which time the solicitors of the petition, with their counsel, were present, and moved for a Commission into the country to examine witnesses touching matters contained in the petition. Whereupon this Committee, taking the petition into consideration, and finding the same ambiguously drawn, and containing only things in general ; and the persons seemed to be complained against not named ; and besides, some things therein represented as crimes, if proved, would not appear to be so ; and conceiving it might be of dangerous consequence to grant such a Commission without clear grounds, did think fit, first, to demand of the solicitors of the petition a particular charge, viz.—what ministers were unjustly ejected, and what persons had embezzled any of the monies, and the like, in order to a thorough examination thereof, as was desired. To which the solicitors of the petition and their counsel, being withdrawn for an hour’s time and upwards, and called in again, returned answer to this effect—that they were

only solicitors for the petitioners, and had no more in charge than the prosecution of the petition ; but said, if convenient time were given to send into the country, particulars might be had. Whereupon this Committee did put off the whole business to the 18th of May, 1652 ; ordering, in the meantime, for the better clearing of things, a letter to be prepared, and sent to the Commissioners, by Act of Parliament, for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, together with a copy of the said petition, desiring them to give an account to this Committee, by the said 18th day of May, touching all the particulars in the said petition contained. Upon which said 18th day of May, though it appeared unto this Committee that the said letter was not sent, notwithstanding, the said Commissioners for South Wales and Monmouthshire, having intimation of the proceedings herein, sent up agents by that day to attend this Committee, with a letter to the chairman, having inclosed in it a full account touching all the particulars in the said petition contained ; and a book also was brought before the Committee, of about sixty sheets of paper, containing all the proceedings of the said Commissioners in obedience to the Act, and avouching the account inclosed in the letter in the particulars thereof ; which said letter and account was read in presence of parties of both sides and counsel of the petitioners ; and, as it gave much satisfaction to this Committee, so also the counsel of the petitioners acknowledged it to be ingenuous, and said they were glad to see the Commissioners could give so good an account of their proceedings ; yet desired a copy thereof, that they might make exceptions thereunto, and withal pressed again to have a Commission into the country to examine witnesses upon their petition. Upon consideration of all which, and debate of what was offered thereupon, this Committee ordered that the petitioners should, on Friday then next following, exhibit such particulars contained in the said petition upon which they would insist and desire to examine witnesses. On which day, being the 21st of May, 1652, the solicitors of the petition came before this Committee ; and, by their counsel, said that they appeared in obedience to the aforesaid order ; and prayed that they might have liberty to examine the truth of their petition, in

every particular, and to that end, that the Committee would grant them a Commission to examine witnesses in the country where the matter of fact doth arise ; refusing to give any other answer, or exhibit the said particulars ; and prayed that this their answer might be entered. Information and proof was also offered to this Committee that the said petition was contrived and printed in this city by disaffected persons, some of whom appear now as solicitors thereof, and copies sent down to malignants in the country, with instructions for gaining underhand subscriptions thereunto, and raising large contributions amongst disaffected gentlemen, for carrying on thereof ; and that the same is chiefly subscribed by malignants, their servants, and tenants, and by women and schoolboys, of the counties of Brecknock and Radnor ; the other five counties scarcely hearing thereof before it was presented ; and that there is a design therein of very dangerous consequence to the peace of these counties ; whereof this Committee conceived themselves not empowered by the Parliament to take full cognizance of.

“ He also reports a letter from several justices of the peace in the said counties to the chairman of the said Committee ; and the answer of the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel to the heads of the said petition ; which were this day read.

“ He also reports an information and discovery of the indirect practices and dangerous designs of John Gunter, and other his confederates, in framing and promoting of the late petition presented to the Parliament.

“ Resolved by this Parliament, that this report be re-committed, with power to the Committee to examine the whole matter, and to report it to the Parliament.”

What became of the petition after this is not known. Its promoters most probably dropped it, as the three years, during which the Act was to be in force, were now up.

The Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales having expired on the 24th day of March, 1653, the Commissioners and the Approvers of Ministers appointed to give effect to its provisions, it seems, applied to the Government for instruction

as to their future proceedings, and the following letter was the reply :—

“Gentlemen,—The late Parliament not having continued the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, and there being no supreme power as yet settled, by whose authority the liberty of the gospel in Wales may be established, I would advise you to go on cheerfully in the work as formerly to promote these good things, and to protect good men in the said work, and put in execution the things settled by former Acts and Ordinances in that behalf. In so doing the Lord will be with you, and you shall have all fitting assistance and encouragement therein from myself, until those placed in supreme power shall take further order.

“I rest,

“Your loving friend,

“O. CROMWELL.

“WHITEHALL, *April 25, 1653.*

“To my loving friends the Commissioners named in a late Act of Parliament, entitled, ‘An Act for the better Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales.’”¹

The Protector soon after this time, notwithstanding the bitter opposition of many opponents, succeeded in forming two committees, the one to eject ignorant and ungodly ministers, and the other, who are known under the name of *Triers*, to examine and recommend fit preachers for vacant livings. These committees continued to act until the death of the Protector. They were made up of persons of different sects, Presbyterians, Independents, and Antipædobaptists. The ecclesiastical measures of Cromwell had very determined enemies in Wales. All the Episcopalians opposed them for obvious reasons; the irreligious multitudes opposed them because they objected to pay tithes; and a section of the Antipædobaptists, probably influenced by Vavasor Powell, who was an extreme Republican and violently opposed to Cromwell. The church at Llanwenarth at a church meeting held May 11, 1655, resolved, “That they do withdraw from all such ministers that do receive

¹ “State Papers Interregnum,” vol. xxxv.

maintenance from the magistrates, and from all such as consent not to wholesome doctrine, or teach otherwise.”¹ It is not probable that the Antipædobaptists generally followed the example of this church, for we find Mr. John Myles, and other prominent members of that denomination, holding livings at the Restoration.

On the 30th of August, 1654, an ordinance was passed, which appointed Commissioners to examine the accounts of the Commissioners under the former ordinance, pursuant to which the sequestrators and treasurers for South Wales delivered in their accounts for the years 1650, 1651, 1652, which was all the time the Act continued in force; and the Commissioners appointed by the Protector having received and examined them, after a full inquiry, allowed and passed them, August 10, 1655.

On the 5th of February, 1659, Colonel Freeman, the member for Leominster, and the counsel for the “Petition of South Wales,” moved for a Committee to Inquire into the management of the Church revenues in South Wales; and, after the restoration of the King, Commissioners were again appointed to the same purpose. The constables of every parish were to summon before these Commissioners all persons in their respective parishes that had acted as Commissioners in ejecting the clergy; all persons that had acted under them, as farmers, tenants, &c., of sequestered livings, &c.; all that had succeeded in the sequestered parishes, or had, either as itinerants, or by way of augmentation, received any of the profits; all parishioners who had kept any of the tithes in their own hands; the heirs, &c., of any of the aforesaid persons. The returns of many of the parish constables are preserved amongst the manuscripts at Lambeth Palace.

Walter Jones, petty constable of the parish of Llandeny, Monmouthshire, returns as follows:—“June, 1662. We return that Walter Cradock, of Llangwmisa, was the chief man, with the rest of the Commissioners, in putting ministers out of their churches and livings. We do return that Walter Cradock died, and that Richard Creed and Thomas Jones, his sons-in-law, are his heirs, executors, and administrators.”

¹ Llanwenarth Church Book.

After all this noise and scrutiny, nothing of any consequence appeared, and, therefore, it was thought proper to drop the Commission, and bury the whole affair in silence.¹

The number of the clergy ejected in Wales, according to Dr. Walker, amounted to between five and six hundred; but, with all his industry, he has not been able to name above three hundred and thirty; and in order to make up even that number, the same individuals are named twice, and some three times over, and the names of some laymen are borrowed to swell the number. If all those in the list who were pluralists, and only deprived of one out of two livings; those whom he describes as having been annoyed, but not ejected; and all that were sequestered as unqualified for the ministry, but employed by the Commissioners as schoolmasters, were deducted, the supposed five or six hundred would be reduced to one hundred and fifty, or less. And how many of these were real sufferers merely on account of their religion, let those who can, say.

Walter Cradock's statement, that there were not in the thirteen counties of Wales thirteen efficient and active ministers in the year 1646, has never been contradicted, but only sneered at; and though the "Propagators" are represented as having "starved souls, and well-nigh extinguished the light of the gospel in the Principality," yet an unquestionable authority affirms, "that, by the end of the year 1652, there were one hundred and fifty good preachers in the thirteen Welsh counties, most of whom preached three or four times a week; and that in every market town there was placed one, and in most great towns two, schoolmasters, able, learned, and University men."² At what period before did the Welsh nation enjoy such privileges?

The ministers and preachers sent out by the Commissioners have had their full share of abuse. They are vilified as cobblers, shoemakers, weavers, masons, carpenters, pedlars, grocers, ploughmen, &c., and traduced as remarkable for their ignorance. It would not be amiss for those sour-minded persons, who approve of this way of abusing their fellow-men,

¹ Neal, vol. iv. p. 109. Walker, part i. p. 169.

² Whitelock's "Memorials of English Affairs," p. 518. 1682.

to devote some of their leisure hours to inquire how many bishops, in the seventeenth century, were better qualified for the work of the Christian ministry than John Bunyan, the tinker; how many gentlemen and clergymen's sons, in this century, excel Samuel Drew, the shoemaker, as metaphysicians, or Samuel Lee, the carpenter, as philologists; and how many Oxonians have eclipsed John Elias, the weaver, Christmas Evans, the farmer's servant, and William Williams, the carpenter, as preachers. The Welsh people are not ashamed of their clerical carpenters, weavers, &c., and hundreds of thousands will have cause for ever to bless God for endowing them with such superior ministerial gifts, and for blessing their labours in the Principality during a long succession of ages.

Some of the meanest and least gifted among the Welsh itinerants of the seventeenth century, who conformed at the Restoration, were greedily ordained by the bishops. Did their lordships' hands, when laid upon them, wipe off the stain of shoemaking, weaving, &c., from their persons, and remove all ignorance from their minds?

Alexander Griffiths, the great culumniator of the itinerants, says,—“And for most of the itinerants, they are such ignorant persons, that they can neither read nor understand English.” To this one of his contemporaries replies,—“We are sure that the major part of the preachers and schoolmasters are University men. We know but one that hath not perfect English; but he is a man of such excellent gifts and dexterous faculty in his own language, that the Lord hath made him instrumental in the converting of divers Welsh people (which is more than any of the ejected ministers can make appear they have succeeded in, though they have been often urged to it, with promises of restitution of their livings, if they could any of them produce one real convert of theirs); and we have heard some understanding gentlemen, and those no friends of the itinerants, affirm, that they had much rather hear a Welsh sermon from him than from some Masters of Arts, professed Welsh preachers. They are so far short of him in the idiom and propriety of the language.”¹

¹ *Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris*," pp. 17, 18.

Vavator Powell, in reply to Dr. G. Griffiths, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph, says,—“But you say that we send out *weavers, smiths, coopers, and soldiers*. It is true there is one weaver, a blessed, understanding man, and one smith, a religious, godly man, and one that hath more learning than some of your curates; and, it may be, two or three gifted, godly, tried, and approved men besides, who may be soldiers, or rather officers, that go along with our preachers, as fellow-helpers (even as the apostles and ministers had in the primitive times) in the work of the Lord, and God hath made them successful. But is it not as lawful for such men, who are godly and gifted, to exercise their gifts, as for simple *Sir Johns*, lack Latin, lack gifts, lack grace, who keep poor alehouses in the mountains, where they and the people spend together the greatest part of the sabbath in profaneness? Of this sort we can produce four for every tradesman the Commissioners have sent out. Nay, in point of learning, they that are now sent out and approved shall compare with so many of the ejected priests; for spiritual gifts and graces, I trow, most of your ejected clergy will not pretend to.”¹

The calumniated Welsh itinerants need no other vindication than a reference to their work. During the short time in which they were permitted to enjoy liberty, they traversed the whole country, many of them preaching six and seven times, and even oftener, every week. In the short space of fourteen years, they presented their countrymen with three editions of the New Testament, and one edition of 6,000 copies of the whole Bible. Soon after the Restoration, above a hundred of them preferred to sacrifice all their temporal comforts, rather than violate their consciences by accepting livings in the Episcopal Church; and, during the reigns of the Stuarts, they braved all the tempests of persecution with the firmness of martyrs.

An extract from the “Brief Narrative” of the apostolic Vavator Powell, which he wrote while a prisoner in the Fleet Prison in London, shall close this account of the propagation

¹ A Relation of a Disputation between Dr. Griffiths and Mr. Vavator Powell,” p. 10. London, 1653.

of the gospel in Wales. “Forasmuch as some have heretofore *enviously* and *falsely* reported, and others credited (nay, to this day believe and affirm), that myself and some others, instead of propagating the gospel, have extirpated it and the preachers thereof in Wales, and converted all the profits of the tithes to our own uses, these are briefly to certify the very truth of the case, as also some of the late and present sufferings and state of the congregated churches, their teachers and others there. In the year 1641, or thereabouts, it was humbly and truly presented in a petition (by many credible persons) to the late King and Parliament, that there were scarce, upon strict inquiry, so many conscientious and constant preachers as there were of counties in Wales ; and those, too, either silenced or much persecuted. The professors of religion, also, exceeding rare and few, unless in some corners of two or three counties ; about which time was the first, if not the only, gathered church in all the country formed. But the late war coming suddenly on, there could be then no redress obtained ; but, on the contrary, most (if not all) of those preachers, with the professors, were forced, through the violence of their persecutors, to leave their habitations and country. And divers of them, having their goods and cattle seized upon by their adversaries, their wives and children were necessitated to live in distress and danger till the war was ended, and the country settled again in peace. By which time encouragement was given to the banished to come back, and those few labourers that were turned out of the vineyard, to return again ; which being done, and God blessing their labours with success in the conversion of many souls, it gave hopes that there was a farther blessing in the cluster, and more straying sheep on those mountains to be brought home to Christ’s fold. Yet the idle and self-feeding shepherds did as much as in them lay to hinder it, till many of them, by virtue of an Act of Parliament, passed in February, 1649–50, as many of their brethren before in England, had been justly ejected for ignorance, scandal, &c., and this upon evident proof against them. Yet not all, as it was falsely reported ; for in Montgomeryshire, the county where I lived, there were eleven or twelve never ejected. So in all

other counties, some more, some less : nor any that I know that were rightly inducted before, and that had the qualifications of true ministers in them ; for such was the *tenderness* and *care* of most or all the Commissioners, who were divers of them Englishmen, and the rest of best reputation for piety and integrity in the several counties, that they did bear with, and give all the encouragement that they could, to all that might probably do good, leaving divers in that were but mere civil men. And they also performed this work *gratis*, receiving no allowance at all, no, not towards their own charges ; and, indeed, there was none granted them by the Act. But the great cry was, that the country was left without preaching ; that the church doors were shut, the sabbaths profaned, and generally the people were turning papists and heathen, for want of the Word of God ; and that all the profits of the tithes were put up in the Commissioners' and other private men's pockets. For me to wipe off all these aspersions, much less to remove the credit of them, sunk so deep into the hearts of prejudicated persons, were but, like Micaiah, to give my single testimony against some hundreds of the clergy that have spoken the contrary. But, reader, if thou art not resolved against truth, I shall offer thee, in a few words, enough to satisfy thee of the falsehood of this whole charge ; the which hath been already sufficiently done divers years ago,¹ as well by the testimony of many magistrates and ministers, as other credible persons of different opinions. However, take this for a truth, till the contrary be proved, which will never be, besides what I said before, that many of the clergy were never outed, and some that were ejected, did also sometimes preach, to please some of their old parishioners, who would hear none else preach. There was not any lawful means unattempted to gain godly preachers for supply there ; as going several times, and sending divers letters to the Universities and London, which were the likeliest places to afford helps, and divers were obtained by that means, though not so many as we wished : partly because that at the same time there was the like Act for several northern

¹ In a book called " Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris," published in the year 1654.

English counties; but especially because they wanted the Welsh tongue. Yet the Lord, that gave the Word, did also raise up more men to preach it than He was pleased to send out at first to all Judæa, nay, to all the world, viz., twelve apostles and seventy disciples. In one church, viz., in the county where I lived (Montgomery), were at least sixteen preachers, whereof ten were University men, some of the meanest of which, since turned apostates, are approved by the bishops, and settled in parishes. And for the profits of the tithes, which before went wholly to the clergy, they were afterwards divided, according to the Act, six ways: one part to the unejected ministers; another part to other ministers, settled and itinerary; a third, to maintain free schools (whereof some of the ejected ministers and their sons were schoolmasters), set up in all (or few excepted) market towns, and in other convenient places, and in some of them two schoolmasters; a fourth, to the ejected ministers' widows and children; a fifth, to such officers as did attend that work, as treasurers, solicitors, sequestrators, &c.; lastly, some allowance was granted to the widows of ministers deceased. These things considered (and the low rates at which the tithes were let and set at in divers counties, because some would not pay, others would not farm them, and the country worse stocked so soon after the wars), will evince there could not be much spare, especially considering that the Act lasted but for three years, viz., till the year 1653. And what was done since, let them account who meddled therein, and acted under Oliver Cromwell, which I and many more of my brethren did not, nor took any salary at all, nor any other maintenance whatsoever since. Withal, what was settled upon me, together with some other preachers, was by the Committee for Plundered Ministers, long before that Act. And let me deal freely and truly with all the world in that particular; I never received by salary, and all other ways put together, for my preaching in Wales, from Christians and from the states, since the beginning, which is above twenty years, but between six and seven hundred pounds at most. And I can with much clearness, confidence, and comfort, call God, the searcher of all hearts, to witness; and I do call Him to record on my soul,

that, to my knowledge and remembrance, I had not anything, directly nor indirectly, but what was ordered me; nor have I, nor any other for me—I express it without any collusion or reservation—so much as a pound or shilling of any money, from any tithes or otherwise, in my hands, belonging to the public; and I humbly challenge and bid defiance to envy itself to prove the contrary, and I desire to be called to an account, if I be suspected; for I will maintain my innocency herein till I die. And yet my accusers have, some by writing, who were ashamed to put their names thereto, and others by word, published, that I had many thousand pounds of the tithes money, nay, had purchased of King's rents and lands some thousands yearly, or at least many hundred pounds per annum; whereas, now it is returned to the King again, it appears it is under seventy pounds yearly, and I never received any year of that above sixty-six pounds ten shillings. This the auditor and tenants know sufficiently, and let them or any other disprove me herein, if they can.

“And whereas it is charged, that many *good and godly men were turned out of their livings*; let them that know such, for I did not, name them, and I doubt not but it will be yet easy to prove the contrary, by their former and present practices. However, for my own part, I often publicly tendered this to the ejected ministers, that if they could manifest that they had the work of grace wrought in themselves, or could produce any that had received spiritual good by their ministry, they should, as far as it lay in my power, be restored to their places: but not one of them ever claimed this. Further, as a consequence thereof, *it was complained that the sabbaths were profaned*: whereas men might ride throughout some counties, and neither see men working, travelling, nor playing on the sabbath. The like, I am sure, neither was before nor now is, *our enemies themselves being judges*.

“*But they further object, that the people were turned infidels and papists*. So many do, where the powerfulest means are, if they come not under them. But why, then, do these men complain, so many are turned to be quite contrary; and if these accusers were fallen out with such men then, how come

they now to own them so much? But to disprove that, take this single instance:—In a few years' time a great part of a former impression of the Welsh Bible was bought up, and afterwards two editions more, one of the New Testament, and another of the whole Bible; and of these two, I believe, are sold off, at least between five and six thousand. By this you may perceive that religion did grow. Also, in the beginning of the wars there was but one or two gathered congregations in all Wales, and in some counties scarce any that made profession of godliness in a strict gospel sense. Yet it hath pleased the Lord so to bless the weak means there, that there were lately, and I hope are still, above twenty gathered churches; in some two, in some three, some four or five hundred members, with their officers, differing little in opinion and faith, and walking in love, and the fear of the Lord.”¹

All the Nonconformists of Wales, previous to the civil wars, and for some years after, were Congregational Pædobaptists; but in the year 1649 some of them changed their views on the subject of baptism, and formed themselves into an Antipædobaptist Church, at Ilston, near Swansea, in Glamorganshire. The following authentic account of the formation of this church has been happily preserved: “The first Baptist Church, within what is now the Massachusetts State, was constituted in Rehoboth this year (1663); Mr. Holmes and his friends having only held a meeting there for a while, and then removed to Newport. For a more clear idea of its original we must look over into Wales, where at Ilston, in Glamorganshire, a Baptist Church was formed October 1, 1649, the beginning whereof their records describe thus: ‘We cannot but admire at the unsearchable wisdom, power, and love of God, in bringing about His own designs, far above and beyond the capacity and understanding of the wisest of men. Thus, to the glory of His own great name, hath He dealt with us; for when there had been no company or society of people, holding forth and professing the doctrine, worship, order, and discipline of the gospel, according to the primitive institution, that ever we

¹ Powell's “Brief Narrative,” prefixed to his “Bird in the Cage,” second edition, printed in the year 1662.

heard of in all Wales, since the apostacy, it pleased the Lord to choose this dark corner to place His name in, and honour us, undeserving creatures, with the happiness of being the first in all these parts among whom was practised the glorious ordinance of baptism, and here to gather the first church of baptized believers.' From whence they go on to relate how Mr. John Myles and Mr. Thomas Proud went up to London the next preceding spring, and, by the direction of Providence, came into the Baptist Society, at the Glasshouse, in Broad Street, under the care of Mr. William Consett and Mr. Edward Draper. Immediately after, they kept a day to seek the Lord, that He would send labourers into those dark corners of the land.

"These travellers were well received, and were soon sent back into their own country again, and were instrumental in gathering a Baptist Church at the time above mentioned, and which, by a blessing upon their labours, increased, by the close of the next year, to fifty-five members. In 1651, forty more joined to it; forty-seven in 1652; and, by the end of 1660, two hundred and sixty-three persons had joined to that church, whose names all now stand in a neat book of records which they kept; which contains a distinct account of the means and methods they took to promote vital and practical religion among the several branches of their society; as also letters of correspondence to and from their brethren in various parts of England and Ireland."¹

To Mr. John Myles belongs the honour of being the founder

¹ Backus's "History of New England, with particular reference to the Baptists," p. 350. Boston, 1777. The Rev. Joshua Thomas, of Leominster, whose valuable work on the "History of the Antipædobaptists in Wales" was published in the year 1778, *supposes* that a Welsh church of that persuasion was formed at Olchon, on the borders of Herefordshire, in the year 1633, and that the church at Llanvaches was made up partly of Independents and partly of Antipædobaptists, with two pastors—Mr. Wroth, an Independent, and Mr. William Thomas, an Antipædobaptist. Both these suppositions are perfectly groundless, and are completely overthrown by the above extracts from Backus, and the statements on pages 37 and 515 of the "Broadmead Records." It is astonishing that the Editor did not perceive that the Records contradicted his extracts from Mr. Thomas's MSS. There is not the least shadow of a proof that there were any Antipædobaptists in Wales previous to the year 1649.

of the Antipædobaptist denomination in Wales. Though at that time a comparatively very young man, he appears to have been remarkably influential, active, and determined. Soon after the formation of the church at Ilston, another was formed at Hay, in Breconshire, the immediate neighbourhood of Mr. Myles's native place; a third was formed at Llanharan, in Glamorganshire, in the same year; a fourth at Caermarthen, in a short time after; and, in the month of August, 1652, a fifth at Abergavenny. These infant churches immediately formed themselves into an Association. The meetings of this Association were held at Ilston, in 1650; at Caermarthen, in 1651; at Abergavenny, in 1653; at Aberavon, in Glamorganshire, in 1654, and another at Llantrissant, in the same year; at Hay, in 1655; and the last meeting during this period, of which an account is preserved, was held at Brecon, in 1656. The ministers and preachers, who attended the meetings of the Association, were John Myles, Thomas Proud, William Thomas, Morgan Jones, David Davies, Walter Prosser, Anthony Harry, John Edwards, William John Prichard, Howell Vaughan, Howell Watkins, Thomas Watkins, Thomas Parry, Thomas Evans, Thomas Joseph, Howell Thomas, and Thomas Jones. It is not known how many of these at that time were ordained ministers, but they were all preachers. They must all have been very young, or inferior to Mr. John Myles in talents and influence, for he was the leading man amongst them, though not then thirty years of age. The minutes of the Association show that singing of psalms was not generally practised, or approved of by the churches, and that they were not unanimous at first in the adoption of strict communion. Imposition of hands also appears to have been the subject of some discussion amongst them.¹

The sudden appearance, and rapid increase of this new denomination in the Principality, naturally excited considerable discussion on the subject of baptism throughout the country. On the 5th of September, 1653, a public debate was held at St. Mary's Church, Abergavenny. The Pædobaptists had the Rev. John Cragg, A.M., and the Rev. Henry Vaughan, A.M.,

¹ Thomas's "History of the Welsh Baptist Association," p. 11.

to defend their views, and the celebrated and learned John Tombes, B.D., of Leominster, the Rev. John Abbot, and Mr. Christopher Price, of Abergavenny, took the other side. Accounts of this debate were published by Mr. Cragg and Mr. Tombes, and, of course, both parties claimed the victory. Whatever was the effect of this controversy on the increase or decrease of the contending parties, it is not likely that the cause of true and vital religion gained anything by it.

The interest of the Antipædobaptists in Wales was considerably promoted when the celebrated Vavasor Powell joined them. Mr. Powell appears to have changed his views on baptism somewhat suddenly; for in the "*Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris*," printed in 1654, page 13, it is stated that the "re-baptized people much differ from Mr. Powell's judgment and practice;" and in January, 1656, we are informed that he had been lately "re-baptized, and several others of his party." The Rev. Henry Jessey about this time visited some parts of Wales, and induced some of the Independents to adopt his views. Mr. Powell was probably one of his converts.¹ Though Mr. Powell never joined the strict communion party, headed by Mr. Myles, yet the fact that a person of his influence and weight of character coincided with their views of the ordinance, when it became known, added not a little to the respectability of their cause in the estimation of the public.

In the course of three or four years after the rise of the Antipædobaptists, the people called Quakers began to propagate their peculiar tenets in the Principality. Whether the rise of the Quakers is to be considered as the natural result of the prevalence of Antipædobaptist views in Wales, or whether it is to be attributed to some other cause, is a question which cannot be settled. Richard Baxter remarks, that there were amongst "the Anabaptists abundance of young transported zealots, and a medley of opinionists, who all hasted directly to enthusiasm and subdivisions, and brought forth the horrid sects of Ranters, Seekers, and Quakers, in the land."² If this was true of some Antipædobaptists in England, it does not appear,

¹ "Life and Travels of R. Davies," p. 11. Seventh Edition, 1844.

² "Orme's "Life of Baxter," p. 82.

from what we know of the founders of that denomination in Wales, that they were of that wild character. At the same time, it is most certain that the hot baptismal controversy which they originated, and the undue importance which they evidently attached to their mode of administering "the glorious ordinance of baptism," as they termed it, had a direct tendency to drive some people to the other extreme of dispensing with the ordinance altogether.

The first Quaker in Wales was Thomas Holmes, but nothing more is known of him than that he was very active in disseminating his principles, and that he had been several times imprisoned. In a short time he found himself surrounded by a large number of fellow-labourers, such as John ap John of Wrexham, Francis Gauler, Richard Davies of Welshpool, Charles and Thomas Lloyd of Dolobran, near Llanfyllin, and several others of less note.¹ These people traversed the country with remarkable diligence, and succeeded in making their peculiar views so generally known, that by the end of the year 1660 there was scarcely a locality in any Welsh county, excepting Caernarvon and Anglesea, without adherents to their sect.

There were, amongst the founders of this denomination in Wales, some men of high respectability in point of social position, talent, and education. Francis Gauler and Richard Davies appear to have been talented and well-educated, and the brothers, Charles and Thomas Lloyd, spent several years at the University of Oxford; but the generality of their followers, though probably sincere and well-meaning, were rude, insolent, and anything but gentlemanly in their behaviour—quite a contrast to the amiable, philanthropic, and inoffensive members of the Society of Friends in the present day. They treated the ministers of religion with unjustifiable incivility, calling them blind priests, hirelings, deceivers, &c. It appears, also, that they made it a point to disturb the religious services by standing up, sometimes in the midst of the sermon, to contradict the preacher; and even during the celebration of the

¹ Their names, with a full account of their sufferings, may be seen in Besse's "Sufferings of the Quakers," vol. i. p. 735, &c.

Lord's Supper they annoyed the communicants by rising one after another to speak.¹ For these flagrant violations of the established laws of social life, many of them were imprisoned during the Protectorate of Cromwell, and none but themselves would have considered their imprisonment as "suffering for righteousness' sake;" but at the same time it is certain that some of them were treated even then with too much severity. Many of them were also prosecuted before the Restoration for non-payment of tithes.

The first Friends in the Principality did not consider it their duty to "go out into the highways and hedges" to gather into their folds the irreligious masses; but they looked upon themselves as specially commissioned to convert the members of the existing churches, and to build up their own sect upon the ruins of other sects. Their rise, therefore, was in no sense at that time a gain to the cause of true religion, but a decided injury. Yet, as time taught them wisdom, they became, in proportion to their numbers, one of the most useful and amiable of all the religious denominations.

The bitter feelings and controversies occasioned by the rise of new sects greatly retarded the progress of religion in Wales for some years previous to the Restoration. Our celebrated countryman, Dr. John Owen, in his sermon before the Parliament, on the 30th of October, 1656, gives us the following melancholy description of the religious state of the country at that time:—"Let it not be thought amiss if I mind you of one part of the nation in especial; the example of the saints allows us a special regard to those of our own nation, our kinsfolk in the flesh. It is for Wales I speak, where the unhappiness of almost all men running into extremes hath disadvantaged the advancement of the gospel and the progress of it, when we had great ground for the expectation of better things. Some are still zealous of the traditions of their fathers; and nothing, almost, will satisfy them but their old road of beggarly readers in every parish. Others, again, perhaps out of a good zeal, have hurried the people with violence beyond their principles—and sometimes, it may be, beyond the truth; and, as Jacob

¹ "Life and Travels of R. Davies," p. 47.

said, over-driving the cattle and young ones has almost destroyed the whole flock. Between complaints on the one side and the other I fear—between misguided zeal and formality—the whole work is almost cast to the ground; the business of Zion, as such, is scarce by any cared for. The good Lord guide you to somewhat for its relief, that those who are godly may be encouraged, and those that need instruction may not be neglected.”¹

While the religious dissensions which now prevailed in the Principality operated most unfavourably on all efforts to evangelize the nation, to make things still worse, a political question was mooted in the years 1654 and 1655, which had the effect of dividing the churches, if not of making some of the leading ministers and professors of piety open enemies to one another. It is well known that there were in this kingdom three large parties, who, for different and opposite reasons, felt bitterly opposed to Oliver Cromwell's policy and his assumption of the title of Lord Protector. These parties were the Royalists, the Presbyterians, and the Republicans. Vavasor Powell strongly sympathized with the Republican party. In the year 1655 he drew up a paper against the Protector's policy, and above three hundred of his religious friends, amongst whom were several ministers, signed it. Soon after another paper in favour of the Protector was drawn up by Walter Cradock and Captain Lewis, and signed by seven hundred and fifty-eight persons, including almost, if not all, the Independent and Antipædobaptist ministers of South Wales. Both these documents were printed and extensively circulated. Thurloe, in a letter to Henry Cromwell, dated February 5th, 1655, says that Powell's paper had only three hundred signatures, all written by the same hand, and that many persons' names were entered without their consent, while the other paper was signed by nearly eight hundred persons, all signing their own names.²

With all their divisions, both religious and political, there was at this time in Wales a respectable number of pious, active, and conscientious ministers; and while the mass of the nation

¹ Owen's Works, Goold's Edition, vol. viii. p. 452.

² Thurloe's "State Papers," vol. iv. p. 505.

was "little better than the Irish, having envenomed hearts against the way of God,"¹ a small remnant was left in almost every county to bear their testimony against the wickedness of the age ; but their trifling bickerings and sinful neglect of the opportunities to do good with which Providence had furnished them loudly called for the rod of correction which fell heavily upon them at the Restoration.

No sooner was Charles the Second restored to the throne, than the iron arm of persecution was stretched forth with violence against all those who would not conform to the rites and ceremonies of the Episcopal Church. The Nonconformists of Wales were amongst the first in the kingdom to feel its power. As early as the month of May, 1660, before the King had actually reached London, the storm of persecution began to rage through South and North Wales ; and, before the end of June, there was scarcely a prison in the Principality which was not overcrowded with Nonconformists. Forty Quakers were at the same time this summer at Cardiff Jail, and twenty-eight in the jails of the counties of Denbigh and Flint. Large numbers of them were also committed in Merionethshire, and six hundred and fifty of their cattle seized. The Rev. Jenkin Jones and several of his congregation were most cruelly treated and incarcerated at Caermarthen ; and the prison at Montgomery was so full of "Independents, Baptists, and Quakers," that the jailer was obliged to pack some of them to the upper garrets.²

The Rev. Vavasor Powell, one of the first and principal sufferers, gives the following account of his own and fellow-countrymen's sufferings in the years 1660-61 :—"Be pleased now to cast your eye upon the late *restriction*, which I might well call *persecution*, of the gospel in Wales. To omit mentioning the great wrong done unto many scores, about May and June, 1660, in committing and continuing them in prison without any cause but to fulfil that saying, *Quicquid volumus*

¹ "Thurloe," vol. ii. p. 256.

² "Life and Travels of Richard Davies," p. 30, &c. ; Besse's "Sufferings of the Quakers," vol. i. p. 740, &c. ; Jessey's "Lord's Loud Call to England," p. 14. 4to. London, 1660.

facimus ; since that time there hath been very violent proceedings, especially in some counties, where some poor and peaceable people have been dragged out of their beds, and, without regard of *sex* or *age*, have been driven some twenty miles to prison on their feet, and forced (though in the heat of the summer, till their feet were much blistered, and they were ready to faint) to run by the troopers' horses, receiving many blows and beatings. Others, in Merionethshire, as if they were brute beasts, were driven into pitfalls or pounds, where they were kept for several hours, their enemies, in the interim, drinking in an alehouse, and forcing the poor people to pay for it, though they tasted not of the drink. Afterwards bringing them unto the seaside and leaving them, in the night, in danger of being swallowed up by the sea, and blasphemously saying that a dog that was with them was the spirit that led them. Others were committed to prison at pleasure, and kept there many months, and yet their cattle and sheep, to the number of above six hundred, taken from them and sold. Others forced, when they were called to the Quarter Sessions, to walk in chains, which should not by law upon any such ground be put upon them, unless they had attempted to make an escape or break out of prison. Others, who were quietly met together after their usual manner for many years, to worship God and edify one another, were cast into prisons, without any examination, contrary to the laws of this and other nations.

“Nay, such was the enmity of the seed of the serpent against the seed of the woman, that though the King was pleased to grant, by his proclamation, Christian liberty for some time, yet, upon the next Lord's day following after the receipt of the said proclamation, some of the officers of one corporation dragged and hauled some poor women that were hearing the Word of God into an alehouse, and kept them there till after night, and until they made them pay for the ale which these disturbers did drink.

“Besides all this, being more forward than in most or any other parts of the kingdom, no preacher that would not conform was permitted to preach, and many hundreds were indicted as recusants, which are not such, and under the

pretence of suppressing conventicles and unlawful assemblies, they hindered the meetings of Christians to serve God.

“ Having thus hinted at some few of the many sufferings of others, I come, in the last place, to give a short intimation of my own ; which I mention not, either to accuse my countrymen, or in the expectation of any benefit thereby to myself, hoping to learn contentment in Christ, with godliness, in the meanest and the most miserable condition, but to remove false reports, and to manifest, as I am confident to express it, that I suffer from men only upon the account of godliness and religion, though upon other information, but false, against me ; as that I should swear the members of my congregation against all magistrates and ministers, a thing I hate, and is directly contrary to my judgment ; and that I should go up and down two counties, preaching sedition and rebellion, though I have not preached, in all, but either two or three days publicly since April, 1660, having been in several prisons ever since, with only about twenty-four days’ intermission since my first imprisonment. And I am not conscious to myself of preaching or doing anything against the present powers, or their laws ; neither can my accusers prove any more against me than the Jews could against Paul, when they accused him of sedition ; but, on the contrary, these men break the laws, and are finable to the King for false information. Yet I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, till He plead my cause, and pray, as Jesus Christ hath taught me, ‘ Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.’ ”¹

These were only foretastes of the bitter cup which our pious forefathers had to drink, almost without intermission, for twenty-eight years. The facts, that all the Welsh Nonconformists consisted of those proscribed sects called Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers, and that the nation, as a body, had a mortal hatred for earnest and strict religion under any name, account for the greediness with which the clergy and the gentry availed themselves of the very first opportunity to persecute them. Many, if not the majority, of the nonconfor-

¹ Powell’s “ Bird in the Cage.” Second Edition, 1662.

ming ministers were ejected from their livings at, or soon after, the Restoration of the King ; and those who were permitted to retain their places then, met with the same fate on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1662.

Short biographical sketches of those ministers who exercised their ministry during the whole of the period embraced by this chapter, or the greater part of it, will furnish some additional illustrations of the facts recorded in the foregoing pages. Amongst the ministers of this period, exclusive of those mentioned in Chapter I., the first who claims our notice is the famous

VAVASOR POWELL.—This eminent minister was born at Cnwglas, or Knucklas, near Knighton, in Radnorshire, in the year 1617. He was related to some of the most respectable families in the counties of Radnor, Montgomery, and Salop. After undergoing a suitable preparatory training in the country, he entered Jesus College, Oxford, where he is said to have made considerable proficiency in the various branches of literature. On his return from the University, he kept a school for some time at *Clun*, in Shropshire. His uncle, Erasmus Powell, being the incumbent of that parish, he used to assist him by reading the prayers ; but it does not appear that he ever received Episcopal ordination. Though well educated, and about entering the ministry in the Established Church, he was, till the twentieth year of his age, an utter stranger to spiritual religion ; a vain and thoughtless youth, and even a ringleader amongst his associates in folly and wickedness ; but the Spirit of God graciously, and somewhat unexpectedly, arrested him in his sinful career. As he was, on one Lord's day, probably after reading prayers at church, and in his clerical dress, or, as he terms it, "the habit of a foolish shepherd," standing and looking at a number of people breaking the sabbath by divers games, one of the people called *Puritans* accidentally passing by, mildly addressed him,—

"Doth it become you, sir, that are a scholar, and one that teacheth others, to break the Lord's day thus?"

To which he replied, like the scoffers in Malachi—"Wherein do I break it? You see me only stand by ; I do not play at all."

"But," replied he, "you find your own pleasure herein, by looking on, and this God forbids in His holy Word."

So he opened his Bible, and read these words in Isaiah lviii. 13, particularly that expression, "*Not finding thy own pleasure upon the sabbath day.*" The words had such an effect upon his mind, that he resolved never to transgress in that way again, and God enabled him to stand to his resolution. But still he was not thoroughly convinced of his lost state by nature, and his need of Christ. This took place in the year 1638. About a year after, Providence led him to hear "an excellent old preacher," probably Mr. Wroth, whose words left an indelible impression upon his mind, which was subsequently deepened by reading Sibb's "Bruised Reed," and one of Mr. Perkins's works. At length, through the powerful ministry of Mr. Walter Cradock, and various other means, he was led to surrender himself entirely to God. The exact time when he began to preach is not certainly known. In the year 1640, when preaching at a house in Breconshire, he, and about fifty or sixty of his hearers, were seized by fifteen or sixteen persecutors, who pretended that they had a warrant from one Justice Williams, of Builth. That night they were locked up in a church, and the next day conducted to the justice's house, who committed them to the hands of the constables. The following day they were examined before that and two or three other justices, and six or seven clergymen; but after a long discussion, they were at that time dismissed with many threats. Some time after, when preaching in a field, in Radnorshire, to a large congregation, Mr. Powell was arrested and committed, by his kinsman, Mr. Hugh Lloyd, the high sheriff. The sixteen or seventeen constables who were charged with the execution of the *Mittimus*, all, except one, would have nothing to do with it. This man, taking Mr. Powell to his own house, which was on the way, and permitting him to lodge there that night, because the prison was at a great distance, was so affected with his devotions in the family, that he could proceed no farther. He left the prisoner in his own house, and absconded; but the persecuted minister, to prevent any trouble to the constable, bound himself with two sufficient sureties to appear at the next

assizes for Radnorshire. At the assizes he was honourably acquitted of the charges preferred against him, and, to the great mortification of his persecutors, he was invited to dine with the judge. The high sheriff, however, continued implacable, and did not rest until he had persecuted him out of the country. To save his life, he fled to London, where he arrived in August, 1642.

He remained in England four years and six months. For the first two years he preached in London, and for the last two years and six months at Dartford, in Kent. He was remarkably popular and useful at Dartford.

As soon as the storm of the war was over, some of the members of the church in Radnorshire went all the way to Kent to invite their beloved pastor to return to them. Before his return, he appeared to be examined by the committee of the Assembly of Divines, appointed to examine and approve public preachers.

Some of the committee proposed that he should receive Presbyterian ordination ; but, being a firm Congregationalist, and, as such, entertaining doubts whether a committee of ministers had power to ordain a person without the concurrence of the church over which he was to exercise his ministry, he would not submit to it. After some debate, between him and Mr. Stephen Marshall in particular, it was agreed to waive the objection, and grant him the testimonial, which was signed by seventeen of the committee, amongst whom we find the names of Joseph Caryl, William Greenhill, Jeremiah Burroughs, Christopher Love, William Strong, Jeremiah Whitaker, Philip Ney, &c.

On his return to Wales he became a most indefatigable and active instrument in propagating the gospel among his fellow-countrymen. He very often preached two and three times the same day, and was seldom two days in the week, throughout the year, without preaching. He also often preached at fairs, markets, in fields, and on the mountains, and wherever he could find a number of people to preach to. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the extent of his labours in Wales from the year 1646 to 1660.

Mr. Powell was thoroughly conscientious, and sincerely aimed,

in all his movements, to promote the glory of God and the salvation of men ; but he did not, in every instance, act with such prudence and caution as were calculated to secure the objects he had in view. His injudicious and intemperate attack on the Protector and his policy, in the year 1655, greatly lessened his usefulness ; this, and the sudden change of his views on baptism soon after, alienated from him the affections of many of his warmest friends and supporters ; circumscribed, to a great extent, his field of labour ; and gave occasion to his enemies to represent him as a turbulent politician, a dangerous member of civil society, and a man of unsettled religious views. Yet, notwithstanding these unhappy circumstances, he continued to labour incessantly, and with considerable acceptance and success, till the Restoration, when a period was put to all his labours and usefulness as a preacher in Wales. Having been the most prominent, active, and useful of all the ministers in the Principality, with the exception of Walter Cradock, and, moreover, being an avowed Republican, he was the very first of the Welsh Nonconformists to suffer persecution at the Restoration ; and even before it had actually taken place he was arrested and imprisoned.

On the 28th of April, 1660, a company of soldiers entered his house, and dragged him to the prison at Welshpool, from which place he was soon removed to Shrewsbury, where he was kept a prisoner for about nine weeks, and then, by an order from the King and Council, he and his fellow-prisoners were released.

On his release from Shrewsbury gaol he returned to Wales, and to the great and most delightful work of his life—preaching the gospel to his fellow-countrymen ; but the High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire thought it his duty to prohibit him, and upon Mr. Powell's refusal to comply with that prohibition he was again imprisoned, after enjoying his liberty for only twenty-four days. Having been detained in prison in Montgomeryshire for some months, he was removed to the Fleet prison, in London, where he was kept nearly two years, closely confined in a small, unhealthy, and most offensive room. This cruel treatment so impaired his health that he never afterwards recovered. On

the 30th of September, 1662, he was conveyed from the Fleet prison to Southsea Castle, near Portsmouth, and was confined there for above five years. Upon the fall of Clarendon, the power of the bloody patrons of persecution being somewhat reduced, Mr. Powell sued for a *habeas corpus*, and soon after, by an order from the King and Council, obtained his liberty once more.

Scarcely ten months had elapsed before he was again imprisoned. Having gone to Bath and Bristol for the benefit of his health, on his return home he preached to large congregations at different places in Monmouthshire. From Newport, in that county, he proceeded to Merthyr Tydvil, in Glamorganshire, where nearly a thousand people were assembled, in and about the churchyard, to hear him. He preached to them from Jeremiah xvii. 7, 8. While he was preaching, George Jones, the parson of the parish, a man of a most reprobate character, posted away to Cardiff, to procure authority from the deputy-lieutenant to arrest him. Amongst other falsehoods, he swore that he was accompanied by a large number of armed men. The following morning, several officers, headed by one J. Carne, a major in the county militia, apprehended Mr. Powell at his lodgings at Merthyr Tydvil. When he desired to see their authority, Carne laid his hand upon his sword, and said that that was his authority. Being conveyed to Cardiff, he was committed to the county prison. This was about the beginning of October, 1668. After several mock trials at Cardiff and Cowbridge, a friend in London procured a writ of *habeas corpus* to remove him to the Court of Common Pleas, which the sheriff refused to obey, until he was threatened with a penalty of one hundred pounds. On the 16th of May, 1669, he left Cardiff for London, where he appeared at the Court of Common Pleas, on the 22nd of the same month; and though none of the charges against him were proved, he could not obtain his liberty, but was again committed to the Fleet prison, merely to please his implacable enemies. From this time he remained in prison until he was discharged by death, at four o'clock in the afternoon, October 27, 1670.

He bore his last illness, which lasted for one month, with

that patience and resignation which characterized him in all his sufferings, and died in the most heavenly frame of mind. His remains were interred in Bunhill Fields, in the presence of a vast multitude of Nonconformists, who attended him to his grave.

Of all the Welsh ministers of this period, Vavasor Powell was the greatest sufferer. During his eventful public career, he was incarcerated in no less than thirteen different prisons ; and had to pass the last eleven years of his life, almost without intermission, in one or the other of them. Moreover, his enemies did not deem it sufficient to abuse his person by imprisonment and cruel treatment, but they also busily used both tongue and pen to vilify his character, during his lifetime and after his death. Yet, in spite of all these malicious attacks, his good name still lives, and his memory is most dear to every religious and unprejudiced Welshman who is acquainted with his history and works.

Amidst all his labours as an itinerant preacher, Mr. Powell found time to write several interesting works, on practical, controversial, and experimental religious subjects. All his publications are small, and evince the author's piety and desire to do good, rather than his mental powers and literary accomplishments. The closing paragraph of the preface to his work on the Two Covenants shows that he considered *preaching*, and not *writing*, as the great work of his life. He thus expresses himself: "Loving reader, having held thee thus long in the *porch*, I invite thee to the *house*; but I am sorry that this book is so big, and, I fear, dear (but not dearer by any merchandise I have made of it); but it is not so dear to thee as to me, it having cost me many nights' study, because I would not neglect, for the printing of a *thousand books*, the preaching of ONE SERMON."¹

¹ The following is a list of Mr. Powell's publications :—

1. The Scripture's Concord, or a Catechism compiled out of the Words of Scripture. London, 1646. A Welsh translation of this work was published about the same time.

2. Christ and Moses' Excellency; or, Zion and Sinai's Glory ; being a triplex Treatise, distinguishing and explaining the Two Covenants. London, 1650.

3. God the Father Glorified. A Sermon preached before the Lord Mayor,

Mr. Powell has been misrepresented as a "sabbatarian Anabaptist," "a fifth monarchy man,"¹ "a weak-minded zealot," and as "driven from Wales in 1642, for want of Presbyterial ordination." Those historians who have recorded such glaringly incorrect statements, betray either their blameable disregard of truth, or their utter ignorance of Mr. Powell's history, and of the religious state of the Principality at that time.

Dr. Toulmin, in his additions to Neal's "History of the Puritans," and other Antipedobaptist writers, have also erroneously asserted that there were in the Principality, before the Restoration, "above twenty distinct churches, consisting of from two to five hundred members, chiefly planted and formed by Mr. Powell's care and industry, *in the principles of the Baptists.*" A more groundless assertion than this was never made. The number of all the nonconforming churches in Wales at the Restoration, with the exception of the Quakers, the Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Recorder of the City of London, Dec., 1649. London, 1650.

4. Christ Exalted. A Sermon before the Parliament, Feb., 1650. London, 1651.

5. Saving Faith, set forth in three Dialogues, between Christ and a Publican, a Pharisee and a doubting Believer. London, 1651. This most valuable little book was published in Welsh the same year, under the title "Canwyll Crist ;" *i.e.*, The Candle of Christ.

6. Spiritual Experiences of Sundry Believers. 1653.

7. A Relation of a Disputation between Dr. Griffiths and Mr. Vavasor Powell. 1653.

8. A Word for God. 1655.

9. The Common Prayer Book no Divine Service. 1661.

10. The Bird in the Cage Chirping. Second Edition. 1662.

11. The Sufferer's Catechism.

12. Sinful and Sinless Swearing.

13. A new and useful Concordance to the Holy Bible ; finished by N. P. & J. F. 1671.

14. The Golden Sayings, Sentences, and Experiences of Mr. V. Powell.

15. Divine Love, or the Willingness of Jesus Christ to Save Sinners. 1682.

The Pamphlet entitled "Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris" was written by Charles Lloyd, Esq., who afterwards became an eminent Quaker, and James Quarrel, the first pastor of the Congregational church at Shrewsbury.

¹ It appears that his indiscreet opposition to Cromwell led him to associate for a time with the Fifth Monarchy men ; but there is no proof that he ever imbibed their wild religious notions, and probably the report of what he said at their meeting at Blackfriars is over-coloured.—Stoughton's "Religion in England," vol. ii. p. 55, &c., ed. 1881.

did not exceed twenty or twenty-one. Of these, five were strict communion Antipedobaptists, with whom Mr. Powell never had any connection. When he changed his views on baptism in 1655, "several other of his party" followed his example. In consequence of this, three or four of the churches in Radnorshire and North Wales with whom he was most immediately connected, became mixed communion societies; but his change did not in the least affect the majority of the churches throughout Wales, nor even the majority of the members of the churches amongst whom he chiefly exercised his ministry; for most, if not all, his immediate successors as pastors of those churches were Pedobaptists.

A person who well knew Mr. Powell has given him the following character: "A man indefatigably industrious, unweariedly laborious in his studies, and in his ministerial performances: for a long time of great strength of body, and equal vigour of mind, both of which, while out of prison, he restlessly employed in the service of God, and very successful endeavours to save the souls of men. He turned his prison into an academy, and proceeded thence an excellent philosopher, an expert physician, and a very accomplished divine. He preached naturally, and that sometimes with little study (because very frequently), to far better purpose than those clergymen who take a whole twelvemonth to study a sermon. A greater command of his own and his auditor's affections no man not apostolically qualified could have. His patience, when called to suffer, was so great, that it ran parallel with his sedulous activity when he was to act; and a larger commendation of that passive virtue in any one cannot well be given. Less resplendent than which his courage could not be; for so prodigious, so not to be paralleled was it, that it may be said, without hyperbole, that he feared not the face, nor yet the fury, of the most menacing, the most mighty mortal. He did and suffered all things so well, that without doubt he has long ago entered into the joy of his Master, and therefore we need not further vindicate him." ¹

¹ "A Winding Sheet for Mr. Baxter's Dead," p. 10. See also "The Life and Death of Mr. Vavasor Powell," and Richards' "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial."

MORGAN LLOYD, of Wrexham, in Denbighshire, was a very eminent preacher, and the most popular Welsh author of that age. He was born in the year 1619. It is supposed that he was a near relation, probably a grandson, of the celebrated poet, Hugh Lloyd, of Cynvael, in the parish of Maentwrog, Merionethshire, and that he was converted under the ministry of Mr. Walter Cradock, at Wrexham, in the year 1635. He was a man of superior mental powers, and an accomplished scholar, but it is not known where he was educated. Like most of his nonconforming brethren, he was a fugitive in England during the civil war. In an undated letter, which he wrote to his mother from Gloucester, we find that he and his friends had been exposed to great dangers; but he there expresses his hope that Providence will soon open a way for their return to Wales. Mr. Lloyd is one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. Though he was the settled pastor of the church at Wrexham, yet he made frequent preaching tours through different parts of the Principality, especially the northern counties. There is a tradition that he often visited the town of Pwllheli, to preach there on market days; that he used to walk through the market with the Bible in his hand; and that his serious and commanding appearance awed the people. This excellent man died on the third of June, 1659, and was buried at Wrexham. Having been called to his rest before the Restoration, he escaped those storms which his surviving friends had to pass through; but the following fact shows what treatment he would have had if alive. One of his contemporaries says, "I have been credibly informed by one that then inhabited Wrexham, that a soldier, who in great rage and malice thrust down his sword as far as he could into Mr. Morgan Lloyd's grave, presently fell ill, and in a short time died."¹

As an author, Morgan Lloyd had no rival, in his time, in Wales. The purity of his style, the depth and sublimity of his ideas, and the remarkable genius which he displays in all his compositions, will secure readers for his works as long as the Welsh language is understood. He was a mystic, and occa-

¹ "A Winding Sheet for Mr. Baxter's Dead," p. 10.

sionally fond of expressing himself in a highly figurative and unintelligible language ; but, with the exception of some paragraphs here and there, his writings abound with the most plain and irresistible appeals to the understanding and conscience of the reader. Notwithstanding his mysticism, he was perfectly orthodox ; at least, no one can prove the contrary ; but, owing to his peculiar turn of mind, he sympathized more with the Quakers than, perhaps, any of his ministerial contemporaries.¹

His works consist of five pamphlets, under the following titles :—

1. "Dergelwch i rai i'w ddeall, ac i ereill i'w watwar ; sef tri aderyn yn ymddiddan, yr Eryr, y Golomen, a'r Ggifran : " *i.e.*, A Mystery for some to understand, and for others to ridicule ; being a Dialogue between the Eagle, the Dove, and the Raven. 1653.

2. "Gwaedd yn Nghymru yn wyneb pob Cydwybod : " *i.e.*, A Voice, or an Appeal, to every Conscience in Wales. 1653.

3. "Y Lleferydd Anfarwol : " *i.e.*, The Immortal Voice. London, 1656.²

4. "Yr Ymroddiad ; " *i.e.*, Self-Resignation. 1657.

5. "Cyfarwyddyd i'r Cymro ; " *i.e.*, The Welshman's Directory. 1657.

Mr. Baxter, in his "Catholic Communion Doubly Defended," page 39, mentions an *English* work, by Mr. Lloyd, entitled "A Dialogue between Martha and Lazarus, about his Soul ; " but we have never seen it. There are several of his letters extant, printed [in] different Welsh periodicals, and three in English, in the volume entitled "Erbery's Testimony Left upon Record." Two of his letters are also preserved amongst Mr. Baxter's MSS. at Redcross Street Library.

If Mr. W. Cradock, Mr. V. Powell, and their contemporaries had followed Mr. M. Lloyd's example in the cultivation of religious literature in the Welsh language, they would have served their generation much more efficiently than they did by publishing English works.

¹ Baxter's MSS. vol. i. No. 15.

² An English translation of this work, by Griffith Rudd, was published in 1739, under the title, "A Discourse of the Word of God."

It appears that Mr. Lloyd resided at Wrexham during the whole time of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate; but we have not been able to find out whether he was the minister of the parish, or merely pastor of the Congregational church which he had formed there. His being an approver under the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales leads us to suppose that he was there in both capacities.

The name of Morgan Lloyd has been for above two centuries a household word throughout the Principality. His peculiarities—being looked upon by his countrymen as having been endowed with the gift of prophecy—his earnest piety, and his unrivalled talents as a preacher and writer, could not have failed to immortalize his fame. One who appears to have been personally acquainted with him has left us the following account of his character:—

“Mr. Morgan Lloyd was a person in whose character we can scarce exceed by giving either too good or too great a one of him. He was extraordinary for his love to his countrymen, to whose soul-service he was entirely devoted, for which he was eminently qualified, being the deepest, truest Welshman, and the most absolute British orator, perhaps, that ever was in the ministerial function, and this without any hindrance to his English fluency. He was extraordinary for the pregnancy of his fancy, the tenaciousness of his memory, and the early matureness of his parts, being but forty when he died; extraordinary for his charity, which was universal, not at all confined to parties and persuasions; for the holiness of his life, diligence in his studies, unwearied meditation, spiritualizing of all things, and for his very impartial and unprejudiced searches after truth; extraordinary also for his humility, meekness, moderation, his great seriousness, and always ready bounty to the poor, which, like the sun, shone upon the bad as well as the good. He was very exemplary for his strict education of his children; for his gravity, which was neither starched nor supercilious, but real and obliging, whereby he awed all companies he came into; and for a strange and unusual majesty which he wore in the pulpit, not forced nor affected, but natural, yet very heavenly and spiritual; in a word, there was no good thing ordinary in

him, but all (*katezoken*) by way of eminency. Such a person was this Mr. Morgan Lloyd, and surely such an one could not be so dangerous a man as Mr. Baxter traduceth him. No; he was many ways beneficial to the world, but never prejudiced nor injured it at all, except in one thing, and that he could not help, which was that he left it too soon."¹

JENKIN JONES was the son of John Jones, or John ap John Howell, of Tymawr, in the parish of Llanddetty, Breconshire. The time of his birth is unknown. His father died in the year 1646, and his eldest son was Sheriff of Breconshire in 1658. He was educated at Oxford, and was a preacher before the wars.² "Upon the breaking out of the civil war," says Jones ("History of Breconshire," vol. ii. p. 525), "he was seen with the sword in one hand and the Bible in the other. He raised a troop of horse, amounting, as Walker says, to six score, among his relations, dependents, and tenants; armed, clothed, accoutred, and furnished with ammunition at his own expense. These he commanded, and, with their assistance, he contrived to keep the King's friends in Breconshire, though not inconsiderable in point of numbers, influence, or opulence, in complete subjection; or, at least, to prevent their giving any effectual support to the Royal cause."

Mr. Jones was a gentleman of considerable property. He was married to one of the Mansells, of Gower, in Glamorganshire. About or soon after the Restoration, he was ejected from the living of Cadoxton, near Neath. According to Walker (part ii. p. 409), he became incumbent of Llanddetty, his native parish, in the year 1656. It is possible that he had residences at both Llanddetty and Cadoxton, having probably some estates belonging to his wife at the latter place. Walker also mentions "one Jenkin Jones, a violent Anabaptist," as holding the living of Merthyr Tydvil, after the ejectment of the Episcopal clergyman; but it is extremely improbable that he was the same person as this Jenkin Jones. Mr. Jones being the proprietor of large estates, an approver of preachers, and one of the leading men in all public transactions of the day, it is not at all likely

¹ "A Winding Sheet for Mr. Baxter's Dead," pp. 11, 12.

² Calamy's "Account," vol. ii. p. 732.

that he would have taken upon him the particular charge of three different parishes at a considerable distance from each other. There was a Jenkin John, or John Jenkin, a one-eyed man, at Merthyr Tydvil, some time after the Restoration. He went to the parish of Aberystroth, and disturbed the peace of the church there by persuading "the Baptists to separate from the Independents."¹ It is quite possible that that person is "the violent Anabaptist" to whom Walker refers.

Mr. Jenkin Jones was a powerful, diligent, and very successful preacher. The Congregational churches at Neath and Llangyfelach, in Glamorganshire, Cefnarth, in Caermarthenshire, and probably most of the oldest churches in the southern part of Breconshire, owe their origin to his indefatigable labours. He often exposed himself to many dangers by his pious and self-denying efforts to propagate the gospel. Being once expected to preach at a place called Gelligrug, in the parish of Aberystroth, Monmouthshire, a fierce person, named John James Watkin, who had been a soldier in the royal army, waylaid him in a narrow lane, near the parish church, in order to kill him. When Mr. Jones came to the spot he amiably saluted the soldier, and took off his hat in passing him. That gentlemanly behaviour, together with the remarkable comeliness of his person, so unnerved the wretch, that he could not execute his fiendish purpose. He followed the preacher to the meeting, and the sermon proved the means of his conversion. From that day he became an altered man, and soon joined the Congregational church in that neighbourhood, of which he continued a consistent member to the day of his death. He died at a very advanced age.²

Dr. Calamy says that Mr. Jones was a Catabaptist. He was probably led, by his well-meaning endeavours to reconcile contending parties, and to unite in the same societies persons of different views on baptism, to entertain sentiments similar to those of the Quakers respecting that ordinance. Some Anti-pædobaptists claim him as one of their party; but none of them ever advanced anything better than a bare assertion to justify their claim.

¹ Jones's "History of Aberystroth," p. 121.

² Ibid. p. 97.

On the Restoration, Mr. Jones was immediately exposed to a series of troubles. All his estates were confiscated and sold. A part of them passed into the hands of one Edward Hughes, a lawyer of Brecon.

Mr. Thomas Gwyn, one of the ordained elders of the Congregational church at Llanigon, in a letter to Mr. Henry Jessey, of London, dated June 29, 1660, says that Mr. Jones and several of his friends had been imprisoned that summer for a month at Caermarthen, for nonconformity. "They bore their sufferings so patiently and cheerfully, that we have much cause to bless the Lord for His gracious and tender dealings towards them. Their conversation was such that made those that threw stones at them, and shouted when they were brought thither, part with them with tears, confessing that they suffered for well-doing, and judged them happy therein."¹ It is probable that Mr. Jones was apprehended whilst officiating to the congregation which he had gathered in the parish of Llanfairarybryn, near Llandovery, in the county of Caermarthen. After his release from the prison at Caermarthen, he returned to his residence at Llanddettty, Breconshire, but his persecutors soon followed him there. On the Lord's day, July 22, 1660, Henry Williams and James Watkins, two of the Breconshire magistrates, sent three officers and twelve soldiers there to disperse a meeting at which Mr. Jones was preaching. The soldiers, in their evidence before the magistrates at Hay the following day, stated that the congregation numbered from five to six hundred people from Breconshire, and the adjoining counties of Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Radnor; that Mr. Jones urged the people to fall upon the soldiers and beat them; that the design of the meeting was to upset the Government, and that Jenkin Jones' servant told one of them that the Government would be changed within a week! Henry Williams, the magistrate, embodied these absurd falsehoods in a letter to the King.²

Having been reduced to poverty by the confiscation of his estates, and being constantly pursued by his bloodthirsty persecutors, Mr. Jones took up his residence in some obscure corner

¹ Jessey's "The Lord's Loud Call to England," p. 14. 1660.

² State Papers, 1660.

out of the reach of his enemies. A Jenkin Jones resided at Kilgerran, near Cardigan, in 1672, recorded his house there as a Congregational place of worship, and got a license to preach in his own house. It is possible, and very probable, that the renowned Jenkin Jones of Llanddettty was this person. We know nothing of the time and circumstances of his death.

JOHN MYLES, the founder of the Antipædobaptist interest in Wales, was the son of Walter Myles, of Newton, in Herefordshire. He was born in the year 1621, entered the University of Oxford at the early age of fifteen, and matriculated at Brasenose College on the 11th of March, 1636. It is not known how long he remained at the University, and whether he took any degrees there or not. His history from the time of his matriculation to the year 1649 is a blank. In the spring of that year he went up to London, accompanied by his friend, Thomas Proud, where they joined an Antipædobaptist Society at the Glasshouse, in Broad Street. On their return to Wales, they formed a church of that persuasion at Ilston, near Swansea, on the 1st of October, 1649. We find Mr. Myles named as an approver in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. That fact proves that he was a minister of high standing in the estimation of his brethren. He appears to have been remarkably active and successful from 1649 to 1660 in propagating his peculiar views on baptism and strict communion throughout the eastern district of South Wales. In a short time he found himself the leading mind amongst ten or thirteen preachers of the same views, and by their united labour five churches were in a short time organized and united into an Association.

It appears that Mr. Myles managed to hold his living as the minister of the parish of Ilston till the Restoration, notwithstanding all his labours and cares in planting, ordering, and visiting the churches of his newly-formed connection. He was ejected in the year 1660; and soon after, owing to the violence of persecution in this country, emigrated to New England, accompanied by several of the members of his church, and settled at Rehoboth, in the State of Massachusetts, where he formed a church in the year 1663. Even there he did not entirely escape

persecution ; for on the 2nd of July, 1667, " at the court held at Plymouth, before Thomas Prince, Governor, and others, Mr. Myles and Mr. Brown, for their breach of order, in setting up of a public meeting, without the knowledge and approbation of the Court, to the disturbance of the peace of the place, are fined each of them five pounds, and Mr. Tanner the sum of one pound ; and we judge that their continuance at Rehoboth, being very prejudicial to the peace of that church, and that town, may not be allowed ; and do, therefore, order all persons concerned therein wholly to desist from the said meeting in that place or township within this month. Yet in case they shall remove their meeting into some other place, where they may not prejudice any other church, and shall give us any reasonable satisfaction respecting their principles, we do not know but they may be permitted by this Government so to do." On the 30th of October following, the Court granted them a large tract of land, upon which they built a town called Swansea.¹

Mr. Myles divided his labours between Swansea and Boston ; but in the year 1678 he settled at Swansea, where he died, February 3, 1683. " His memory is still (1777) precious among us. We are told that being once brought before the magistrates, he requested a Bible, and, upon obtaining it, he turned to those words in Job xix. 28, ' Ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me ? ' which having read, he sat down ; and the word had such good effect upon their minds as to move them to treat him with moderation, if not with kindness. His son went back to England, and his grandson, Mr. Samuel Myles. was an Episcopal minister at Boston in the year 1724."²

HUGH EVANS was, it is supposed, born in Radnorshire, or on the borders of Shropshire. He removed, in his youth, to Worcester, where he resided for some years. About the commencement of the civil war he took up his residence at Coventry, where he became a member of a religious society. After some time he was encouraged to exercise his gifts as a preacher. He was placed for a time under the care and tuition of Jeremiah Ives,

¹ Backus's " History of England," pp. 353-4.

² Ibid. pp. 506-7.

who, if not then, afterwards became an Antipædobaptist minister, and one of the most celebrated disputants of the age. In the year 1646 or 1647 Mr. Evans returned to his native country, and in 1650 was appointed, by the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, to be an itinerant preacher in the counties of Radnor and Brecon. He died in 1656, or the following year. It appears that the Quakers most violently opposed him in his lifetime, and, about the time of his death, one of them published a pamphlet to vilify his character. The Quaker denominates him, "The Blind Welsh Priest of Radnorshire." Two of his friends, in the year 1658, published another pamphlet, to defend his character, wherein he is represented as a most pious and worthy minister of the gospel of Christ.¹

Mr. J. Thomas *supposes* that Mr. Evans was an Antipædobaptist before his return to Wales; that he was the first settled minister of that denomination in Radnorshire; and that he gathered and formed a strict communion church there soon after his return from England. Dr. Richards has recorded these suppositions as unquestionable facts, but they appear to be altogether without foundation. Mr. John Myles positively asserts that he and his friends at Ilston were the only people that he ever heard of in all Wales who not only practised strict communion, but "among whom was practised the glorious ordinance of baptism." Mr. Henry Maurice also, in his account of the churches in Radnorshire, written in 1675,² mentions Mr. H. Gregory as the teaching elder of the only Antipædobaptist church in the county, and one Jeremy as his predecessor or co-pastor. No reference is made at all to Mr. Hugh Evans. If he ever was an Antipædobaptist, he must have become such about the same time as Mr. V. Powell; but there is no proof that he ever gathered a church of that persuasion in Radnorshire.

DAVID WALTERS was an eminent itinerant preacher in the

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," gan J. Thomas, pp. 108-9; Richards' "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial," pp. 227-30; Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," part 1, p. 158.

² "Broadmead Records," p. 518.

vale of Glamorganshire. He is one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. William Erbery dedicated his account of a disputation at Cowbridge, between himself and one Henry Nicholls, to Mr. Walters, and addresses him as "Worthy Sir." Dr. Walker refers to him as preaching often at Baglan, Aberavon, and Llandaff. He has had his full share of abuse from that scurrilous writer, which is a certain proof that he was not an ordinary man. Walker, referring to a service which he held at Llandaff Cathedral, says, "One Walters, the weaver, who pretended to the spirit, mounted the pulpit, and preached (*more suo*) three hours together, running down the decent ceremonies of the Church, and putting up, as well as he could, a slovenly, outward worship, beginning in Genesis, and ending in the Revelations. This man (if he knew what he was himself, who was formerly a common country thatcher) was a Presbyterian, had a vast memory to retain the Scriptures, and delighted very much to exercise his faculty in Llandaff pulpit. In short, he was a hackney itinerant preacher five miles round about."¹ He might as well say thirty miles round about. It was ordered by both Houses of Parliament on the second day of May, 1646, that Mr. Walters should be employed as itinerant preacher in the county of Glamorgan; and in compliance with that order the Committee for Plundered Ministers passed the following resolution on the 24th of July, 1646: "It is ordered that the yearly sum of fifty pounds be paid out of the profits of the impropriate rectories of Llandilotalybont and Reynoldston, in the county of Glamorgan, sequestered from the Bishop of St. David's and William Thomas, delinquents, to and for the maintenance of David Walters, a godly orthodox divine, who is therefore required to preach, catechise, and instruct in several churches and chapels within the said county, the parishioners and inhabitants within the several towns and parishes of the said county. And the sequestrators of the premises are required to pay the same accordingly at such times and seasons of the year as the said rents shall grow due and payable."² Mr. Walters probably died some time before the Restoration.

¹ Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," part ii. p. 350.

² State Papers: Interregnum, vol. cclxxvi. p. 136.

RICHARD POWELL, Vicar of Llanigon, Breconshire, was another of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. It appears that he had been in the ministry as an Episcopal clergyman for some years before the wars. This good man is also most violently abused by Walker, on the authority of Alexander Griffiths. He is accused of declaring in his sermons that the Lord's Prayer was a rotten prayer, and that God was not the Creator of the world; of receiving a salary of one hundred pounds a year from the Commissioners, in addition to the profits of the living of Llanigon, and three other neighbouring parishes: and, what is still worse, of marching before his parishioners and others against the forces of Sir William Waller. The reader will take these charges for what they are worth, after considering the character of the party who fabricated them. In the year 1653, Mr. Powell was inducted to the living of Glasbury, in Breconshire, from which his slanderer, A. Griffiths, had been ejected in 1650. Mr. Thomas Watkins, a justice of the peace for the county of Brecon, characterizes Mr. Powell as "an honest, faithful preacher of the gospel." He died at his residence, Penywerneithin, in Radnorshire, in the year 1658.¹

MORRIS BIDWELL became the incumbent of St. Mary's, Swansea, on the ejection of Morgan Hopkin for inefficiency. He was an approver in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel; but we cannot determine whether he was a Nonconformist or not. Walker says that he died at Swansea before the Restoration; and he is complained of by the Quakers as having treated some of their preachers unkindly in the year 1658. This is all the account we are able to give of him.²

JENKIN LLOYD, A.M., was the eldest son and heir of David Lloyd, Esq., of Vairdref-fawr, in the parish of Llandysil, Cardiganshire. He is one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel; and Meyrick says that he was chaplain to Oliver Cromwell.³ He was the minister of his native

¹ Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," part i. p. 159; The Lambeth MSS. vol. 1027; "Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris," p. 17.

² Walker, part ii. p. 278; Besse's "Sufferings of the Quakers," vol. i. p. 737.

³ Meyrick's "History of Cardiganshire," p. 158.

parish, and an itinerant preacher during the interregnum. The time of his death is unknown; but he was called to his rest some time before the storm of St. Bartholomew's day, 1662. In the year 1658 he published a small volume, in the English language, entitled "Christ's Valedictions; or, Sacred Observations on the Last Words of our Saviour delivered on the Cross." This, we believe, is the only work which he ever wrote. The smooth and natural style in which it is written, the striking illustrations with which it abounds, and the evangelical tone and holy unction which pervade it, prove that the author must have been a most efficient minister of the gospel.

EVAN BOWEN had been for some years an itinerant preacher, and on the 12th of March, 1653, was appointed the settled minister of the parish of Llanafanfawr, in the county of Brecon. Dr. Walker says that he was fifty-five years of age at that time; that he was a mason by occupation; and that he was ignorant of the English language. All these charges, if true, would not prove his unfitness to be the minister of that mountainous parish. It is quite possible that he is the person referred to in the "Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris," page 17, as "a man of such excellent gifts and dexterous faculty in his own language, that the Lord hath made him instrumental in the conversion of divers Welsh people." He was the founder of the Congregational church at Troedrhiwdalar, in the parish of Llanafanfawr, which, from his time to the present day, has been a remarkably peaceable and flourishing church. The Rev. David Williams presided over it from the year 1803 to 1874, when he died in the 96th year of his age; and his predecessor, the Rev. Isaac Price, for fifty-five years. Mr. Bowen died about or before the Restoration.¹

It is impossible to form a correct idea of the number of Nonconformists in Wales at the close of this period. The gathered churches, as we have already seen, were above twenty in number, containing from two to five hundred members each; but this number is not, by any means, an infallible datum from which an estimate of the strength of Nonconformity at that time may be

¹ Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," part i. p. 161; part ii. p. 409. "Hanes Cymru gan Carnhuanawc," p. 790.

taken, as some of the ministers and several of the members of those churches conformed in 1662 ; while, on the other hand, a large number of ministers and a vast multitude of people, who were not actual members of those societies, became decided Nonconformists when the Act of Uniformity was enforced. This period was properly the seed-time of Nonconformity. During the succeeding periods we shall see the seed then sown taking root, and gradually growing, amidst all the storm of persecution, into an abundant harvest.





CHAPTER III.

FROM THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY TO THE REVOLUTION,
A.D. 1662—1688.

Character of the Welsh Episcopal Clergy and Gentry at the Restoration—The Act of Uniformity—The Ministers and Preachers silenced or ejected in the Principality—in Breconshire—in Cardiganshire—in Caermarthenshire—in Carnarvonshire—in Denbighshire—in Flintshire—in Glamorganshire—in Merionethshire—in Monmouthshire—in Montgomeryshire—in Pembrokeshire—in Radnorshire—Successful Labours of the Propagators—Presbyterianism—The Conventicle Act—The Five Mile, and the Test and Corporation Acts—Sufferings of the Welsh Nonconformists under these Acts—Conventicles in Wales in 1669—Indulgence granted by Charles II.—Number of the Welsh Nonconforming Churches in 1675—Activity of the Nonconformists—Welsh Books published by them—Thomas Gouge, his Labours and Sufferings in Wales—Bishop Lloyd and the Nonconformists—Public Discussions at Llanfyllin and Oswestry—Indulgence granted by James II. in 1687—Biographical Sketches of Henry Maurice, Stephen Hughes, Peregrine Phillips, William Jones, Samuel Jones.

IT has already been stated that a large number of ministers in Wales were deprived of their livings, or silenced, at or soon after the Restoration; that some of them had been cruelly persecuted before the King had actually ascended the throne; and that this greediness to persecute arose from the deep-rooted enmity of the Episcopal clergy, and the generality of the gentry, to Puritanism. Mr. Samuel Jones, of Brynllwarch, one of the most learned and moderate of the Welsh Nonconformists, in a letter to Mr. Richard Baxter, dated April 29, 1661, gives the following account of his countrymen at that time: "This only I shall say, that from those sad instances that occur in the most

reformed parts and cities of the nation, you may take aim what to conclude of these rude and darker corners, where generally the very form of godliness is as much hated as the power of it is little understood. We bless the Lord, and pray Him to bless His Majesty, for that liberty we have hitherto enjoyed in the free exercise of our ministry. A blessed respite His Majesty's declaration afforded us, though against the hearts of those among whom we live. Oh, how many a mouth hath it kept open powerfully, indeed, and as it were valedictorily, to preach the blessed gospel to the consciences of the poor, mad, wild, dead people, who otherwise had been stopped, to the joy and rejoicings of the hearts of many profane ones. Well, yet we have hopes in a good God and a gracious King; and though the *ark* of the Church should be tossed from one exteme to the other, when God Himself is both master of the storm and anchor to it, it shall at length rest upon Ararat."¹

The Act of Uniformity, which was passed on the 19th of May, 1662, came in force on the 24th of August following. By this Act every minister, in order to be qualified to hold a living, or to conduct any public religious service legally, was required, if not episcopally ordained before, to submit to be re-ordained; to declare his unfeigned assent and consent to everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, as consistent with the Word of God; to take the oath of canonical obedience; to engage not to advocate any change in the constitution of either Church or State; and to hold it unlawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take up arms against the King.

This tyrannical and iniquitous ordinance, as one of its promoters confessed, was intended to make all Non-Episcopal ministers either Nonconformists or knaves. Happily for the credit of religion, and the security of the civil and religious liberty of the kingdom, there were in England and Wales at this time above two thousand conscientious ministers, who, rather than unman themselves, and violate their consciences, by tamely submitting to the absurd terms of conformity imposed by this Act, preferred ejection, imprisonment, poverty, and suffering in every form. Wales, dark and irreligious as it was, furnished

¹ Baxter's MSS. vol. iii. p. 38.

a respectable proportion of this noble band of Nonconformist confessors.

The following list of the ministers and itinerant preachers in the Principality, who were either silenced after the Restoration, or ejected by the Act of Uniformity, is as complete as it can be made; but it is almost certain that several other worthy men, of whom no record has been preserved, were amongst the sufferers.

ANGLESEA.

This is the only Welsh county in which we find no Nonconformist in 1662; but at the present time there is no part of the Principality where Nonconformity is stronger, more influential, and respectable than here.

BRECONSHIRE.

Mr. JOHN EDWARDS was ejected from Cathedine. We are inclined to think, contrary to Dr. Calamy, that this person is the same as the John Edwards of Llangors, mentioned by Dr. Walker (part i. 160, and part ii. 258). As Llangors and Cathedine are within two miles of each other, it is not probable that the Commissioners would have stationed two preachers in such a thinly-populated district, when there was such a scarcity of preachers. Mr. Edwards was an Antipædobaptist. He took a part in the baptismal discussion at Abergavenny in 1653. In the year 1689 he was member of a mixed communion church at Llangwm and Abergavenny; and at that time he is described as "an ancient disciple, and faithful in his office, but indigent in his circumstances." Dr. Walker has nothing worse to say of him than that he was a shoemaker.¹

Mr. DAVID WILLIAM PROBERT was ejected from Llandefeilog. Of this good man we have no account whatever to give. Dr. Walker says that he was a ploughman; but, notwithstanding that, he might have been an efficient preacher.

Mr. ELIAS HARRY was ejected from Patrishw, near Crickhowell. Dr. Walker calls him a weaver. What became of him after his ejection is unknown.

Mr. THOMAS EVANS was an itinerant preacher of the Anti-

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," Appendix, p. 6.

pædobaptist denomination. He was sent out by the Commissioners under the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, in the year 1653, at a salary of £30 per annum. He died in the year 1688, after suffering imprisonments, and various annoyances and losses, on account of his Nonconformity. Several of his descendants became eminent Antipædobaptist ministers. Hugh Evans, A.M., of Bristol, was his grandson; and Dr. Caleb Evans his great-grandson.¹

Mr. THOMAS WATKINS lived in this county, in the neighbourhood of Hay, and was an Antipædobaptist. It appears that he was an itinerant preacher some years before the Restoration. Soon after he became the settled minister of the strict communion church, which met at different places about Olchon in Herefordshire, and Hay in Breconshire. He was very active, useful, and influential. He died in the year 1694.²

Mr. THOMAS PARRY was another Antipædobaptist, and a very useful preacher in this county. He was an intimate friend of Mr. V. Powell, and occasionally accompanied him in his preaching excursions. Mr. Parry was present at the Association held at Abergavenny in 1653, and had been enabled to bear his testimony during the persecuting reigns of Kings Charles II. and James II. He lived to a very advanced age, and died in the year 1709.³

Mr. HENRY MAURICE, though ejected in Shropshire, spent most of his time from his ejection to his death in this county. See the biographical sketches at the end of this chapter.

CARDIGANSHIRE.

Mr. JOHN EVANS was a native of this county, and was ejected from Bangor and Henllan, near Newcastle Emlyn. "He was converted in a remarkable manner. Having been profaning the sabbath in the morning, he heard a sermon in the evening, which was the means of his becoming a new man. In process of time he was called to the ministry, and ordained by presbyters. Griffith Morgan, the ejected Rector of these parishes, in

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 33, 123-4.

² Ibid. p. 75.

³ Ibid. pp. 79, 80.

his petition for his restoration states that he had been ejected in 1650, and that John Evans, a shoemaker and an illiterate man, officiated here for the last three years. The petition was presented June 23, 1660.¹ Though his acquired furniture was not remarkable, his zeal was great. He was indefatigably diligent, and his labours were crowned with success. He served the congregation at *Cellan*, near Lampeter, several years. His great patron, David Lloyd Gwynne, offered him a rich parsonage, but he durst not accept it. He died soon after the Uniformity Act took place."² Mr. Palmer confounds this Mr. John Evans with Mr. John Evans of Wrexham, the father of Dr. John Evans, the author of the Sermons on the *Christian Temper*; but they were different persons.

Mr. CHARLES PRICE, ejected from Cardigan, was a native of Radnorshire. "He preached some years in this county as an itinerant. He was diligent in his public work, and edifying in his private discourse. After the Restoration he went to England, and lived and died at Hammersmith."³ Mr. Price was the founder and first pastor of the Congregational church which now meets at Llechryd, near Cardigan.⁴

Mr. DAVID JONES, ejected from Llanbadarnfawr, was a native of this county. He was educated at Oxford, and matriculated at Christchurch on the 10th of November, 1654. He is described as "a man of good learning; a plain and successful preacher, and ordained by presbyters. When he was ejected, he maintained himself and his family by keeping a grammar school, preaching as he had opportunity, for which he was several times in trouble. He died of consumption, with a joyful hope and a steady trust in God." In 1675 he was residing in the parish of Penbryn; and his name is mentioned as the pastor of the Congregational churches at Cilgwyn, and other places in Cardiganshire, as late as the year 1694. The time of his death is unknown.⁵

Mr. EVAN HUGHES, ejected from Llandefriog, was "born in

¹ Journals of the House of Lords, vol. ix.

² Palmer's "Nonconformist's Memorial," vol. iii. p. 496.

³ Ibid. vol. iii. p. 496.

⁴ "Broadmead Records," p. 517.

⁵ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 469. Cilgwyn Church Book.

this county, and ordained by presbyters. He was a very plain and affectionate preacher, and was useful to many. He had various trials and difficulties; but his patience was exemplary. Though he was low in the world, he was contented and easy." He is mentioned in 1694 as "a teaching elder" in the churches at Cilgwyn, Caeronen, &c.¹

Mr. LEWIS PRICE was ejected from Llangunllo.

Mr. RICHARD DAVIES was ejected from Penbryn.

Mr. JOHN HARRIES was ejected from Tregaron. We may infer, from what Dr. Walker says, that he exercised his ministry as an itinerant preacher, in the counties of Brecon and Radnor, for some time. It is not known when he settled in this county, or what became of him after his ejection.

Mr. JOHN HANMER was a native of Radnorshire. He is also mentioned by Dr. Walker as receiving a salary from the Commissioners as an itinerant preacher in the counties of Brecon and Radnor. After his ejection, "he served the congregation at *Cellan*, with great humility and success, several years. Meeting with troubles, he went into his own county, but did not give over preaching to his dying day. He lived to a good old age."²

Mr. RODERICK THOMAS.—"He was designed and brought up for the ministry in the Church of England, but his thoughts afterwards took another turn. He and Mr. Evan Hughes were ordained together by presbyters. For some years he served the parish of *Llanfihangel y Croyddyn*, in this county. He was once prevailed with by his friends to read the English liturgy, but was troubled for it ever after, and would never do it any more."³

Mr. MORGAN HOWELL was an eminent preacher in this county. He was a native of Bettwsbledrws, near Lampeter. We have already given an account of his remarkable conversion, in our biographical sketch of Mr. Walter Cradock, in Chapter I. He joined the Congregational church in Cardiganshire, then under the pastoral care of Mr. Rees Powell, of Lampeter, in February, 1654, and not long after began to exercise his

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 496.

² Ibid. p. 496.

³ Ibid. vol. iii. p. 497.

gifts as a preacher. He was a teaching elder in the churches at Cilgwyn, Caeronen, Crug y maen, &c., in the year 1694. It is probable that he died before the close of the seventeenth century.¹

Mr. Rees Powell, of Lampeter; Mr. Roderick Davies, of Llanllwchhaiarn; and Mr. Thomas Evans, of Ystrad, were for some time deprived of their livings, but afterwards conformed.

CAERMARTHENSHIRE.

Mr. WILLIAM JONES was ejected from Cilmaenllwyd. (See the biographical sketches at the end of this chapter.)

Mr. DAVID JONES was ejected from Llandyssilio. He was a most excellent and useful minister, and one of the greatest benefactors of his country in that age. His labours in diffusing the Bible and other religious books in the Welsh language, will come under our notice in a subsequent part of this chapter. Owing to the culpable neglect of his surviving contemporaries, we are not able to give any satisfactory account of his life, labours, and sufferings. After his ejection, he laboured, in connection with Mr. Stephen Hughes, in different parts of the counties of Caermarthen and Glamorgan, especially about Capel Isaac and Llanedi, in Caermarthenshire. We find in the "Broadmead Records" (pp. 456-7), that he visited Bristol in 1682, where he preached twice, notwithstanding the imminent danger to which he exposed himself by so doing. He was then residing at Swansea, where he probably ended his days some time after the year 1690. "Though he was taking pains to do good to souls in this barren country, yet he met with great difficulties and much opposition. Once a writ *de excommunicato capiendo* was out against him."² Mr. Moses Williams, vicar of Devynnock, writes bitterly, and charges him with having gain more than religion at heart, since he would not incur the expense of publishing the Book of Common Prayer and the Apocrypha with his edition of the Welsh Bible in 1690.³

¹ Cilgwyn Church Book.

² "Hanes Crefydd yn Nghymru, gan D. Peter," p. 563. Calamy's "Continuation," vol. ii. p. 845. Capel Isaac Church Book.

³ Add. MSS. British Museum, No. 14,952, p. 7.

Mr. JOHN POWELL was ejected from Llangyndeirn.

Mr. DAVID PRICE was ejected from Llangynwr.

Mr. MEREDITH DAVIES was ejected from Llanon. He assisted Mr. Stephen Hughes for some time in this county, and then removed to Gower, in Glamorganshire, where he probably died.¹

Mr. JAMES DAVIES, ejected from Merthyr, near Caermarthen, "was a native of Radnorshire. A humble, modest man, who had a good share of school learning, and was regularly ordained. He left a good living, though he had nothing to trust to but the providence of God for his livelihood. For some time he maintained his family by keeping a grammar school, and often preached gratis up and down the country. He afterwards served the flock allotted him in the lower part of Cardiganshire, and the upper part of Pembrokeshire, in the heat of persecution, as well as in the time of liberty. He was a hard student, ever intent upon improving himself, and was very kind and respectful to all the sincere lovers of Christ. His sermons were solid, clear, and affectionate, and they were eminently attended with a blessing. He bore many afflictions patiently, and at last died comfortably, much lamented by all that knew him. Walker says he was a labourer; if so, his attainments were the more extraordinary." ² The time of his death is unknown. He was alive in the year 1675.³

Mr. STEPHEN HUGHES was ejected from Meidrym. (See the biographical sketches at the end of this chapter.)

Mr. REES PROTHEROE, or PRYTHERCH. (See biographical sketches at the end of Chapter IV.)

Mr. PHILIP LEWIS was an itinerant preacher in this county, and continued a Nonconformist.

Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS was also an itinerant preacher in this county. He was an Antipædobaptist, and a member of Mr. John Myles's church at Ilston. He was one of the elders or messengers of that church to the Association held at Abergavenny in 1653, where he was appointed to preach at or about

¹ "Hanes Crefydd yn Nghymru, gan D. Peter," p. 563.

² Palmer, vol. iii. p. 498.

³ "Broadmead Records," p. 517.

the town of Caermarthen for one week every month. It is probable that he settled in this county from that time, until he was driven away by persecution. Some time after 1662 he settled at Llantrissant, in Monmouthshire, where he married a daughter of Mr. George Morgan, of that parish. He had a considerable number of respectable people under his pastoral care at Llantrissant, Llangwm, Llangibby, Llandegveth, and Usk. He is mentioned in the "Broadmead Records" (p. 92) as having been sent for to Bristol to baptize fourteen persons, in March, 1667, the pastor of the church at Broadmead at that time being in too delicate a state of health to go into the water. Mr. Thomas died on the 26th of July, 1671, being then a comparatively young man. The editor of the "Broadmead Records," after the Rev. Joshua Thomas, confounds Llantrissant in Monmouthshire with Llantrissant in Glamorganshire. The church at the former of these places was a branch of Mr. Wroth's church, and was probably, at its formation, made up exclusively of Pædobaptists, and even after Mr. Thomas's death it was an open communion society; while the church at the latter place was a strict communion society from the beginning. It was this church that sent messengers to the general meeting at Abergavenny in 1653, and not the one at Llantrissant in Monmouthshire.¹

MR. MORRIS MEREDITH, who held out for some time, afterwards conformed.

CAERNARVONSHIRE.

MR. JOHN WILLIAMS is the only Nonconformist in this county of whom we have any account. Calamy does not name the parish from which he was ejected. Some suppose that it was Llandwrog, and others that it was Ynyscynhaiarn, near Portmadoc. Mr. Williams gathered a Congregational church in this county in Cromwell's time, which, after passing through the fiery ordeal of persecution, and undergoing the various changes of time, continues to this day in a flourishing condition. From time to time branches of it were formed into distinct

¹ Thomas's "History of the Welsh Association," p. 19. The Lambeth MSS. vol. 639. "Broadmead Records," pp. 90-92.

churches in different parts of this county and in Anglesea. After his ejectment Mr. Williams went to London, to escape, it is supposed, from the violence of persecution; but such was his sense of duty, and sympathy with his persecuted friends, that he soon returned, though at the peril of his life. He bore his full share of the troubles of those days, and died in the year 1674, of the tertian ague. "He was an ingenious and learned man, and a good preacher. He preached *gratis* wherever he had an opportunity," not only in his own county, but also in the counties of Merioneth, Denbigh, and Flint.¹

When Mr. Williams arrived in London in 1662, a Mr. Hart, a gentleman in Kent, engaged him as his domestic chaplain. In October, 1663, the Deputy-Lieutenants of Caernarvonshire sent a letter to Sir Henry Bennett, Secretary of State, alleged to have been written by John Williams to Richard Edwards, Esq., of Nanhoron, and intercepted by them at the post-office. That letter contained treasonable expressions. On its receipt, Sir H. Bennett at once issued warrants to apprehend both Williams and Edwards. Edwards happened to be at the time in London, having an important lawsuit going on respecting some landed property in Caernarvonshire, and Williams, being in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, when he heard of the apprehension of Edwards, and that a similar warrant was out against him, gave himself up at once. At his trial before Sir H. Bennett he denied all knowledge of the intercepted letter. He was then ordered in court to write on a slip of paper, and that writing was sent down to Caernarvon and the deputy-lieutenants were ordered to show the intercepted letter to respectable persons acquainted with Williams's handwriting. Three gentlemen—Jeffrey Parry, Morrice Griffith, and Mark Lloyd, examined the document, and deposed on their oaths that it was not the handwriting of John Williams. The deputy-lieutenants then had, to their sad mortification, to send the depositions of these gentlemen to Sir H. Bennett, who had consequently nothing to do but discharge the prisoners. The

¹ Drych yr Amseroedd, gan R. Jones, pp. 19-23, 2nd edition. Palmer, vol. iii. p. 477.

whole affair arose from simple malice and a bitter persecuting spirit. The persons who were guilty of this mean and wicked transaction were Sir Thomas Bulkley, John Owen, Thomas Vaughan, and William Griffith, of Lleyn. Williams and Edwards were kept prisoners for ten weeks, and their expenses during that time amounted to nearly thirty pounds each.¹

DENBIGHSHIRE.

Mr. WILLIAM JONES, ejected from Denbigh, was a native of Merionethshire. "After an advantageous education, he was settled at a school at Ruthin, from whence he removed to Denbigh, where he was chosen by the Governor, Colonel Twistleton, to be preacher in the castle, and about 1648 became minister of the parish. He took a journey to London, to confer with Mr. Baxter and others, before the Uniformity Act passed, and returned fully bent for Nonconformity, to which he was most inclined before. When the Five Mile Act forced him from the town, he found a comfortable retreat at Plasteg, in Flintshire, a seat belonging to the ancient family of the Trevors, where some land was generously allowed him by Mr. Trevor to the value of £20 a year. Having lived there for several years, he removed to the parish of Hope, where he died, in a good old age, in February, 1679, and there he was buried. Dr. Maurice, of Abergele, a conforming minister, preached his funeral sermon, and gave him his due character. He also penned the Latin inscription which is on his grave-stone, and which is highly honourable to his memory. Mr. Jones was a person of a sweet and pleasant countenance, of unquestionable learning, prudence, moderation, and piety. He suffered three months' imprisonment for performing family duty in a gentleman's house after he was silenced. He could not think himself discharged from preaching by the laws of men, and therefore continued his ministry in private as he had opportunity. Being solicited by his wife and relations to conform on account of his family, he answered, "God will provide: none of you will go with me to judgment." He had

¹ State Papers, Charles II., vol. lxxxv. pp. 121-2; vol. lxxxvi. p. 83.

a good report of all men, and of the truth itself. He translated into Welsh Mr. T. Gouge's "Word to Sinners and Saints," and his "Principles of the Christian Religion." Both these works were published and distributed amongst the poor in Wales, in the year 1676.¹ Mr. Jones is an approver in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales.

Mr. RICHARD JONES was ejected from the Free School at Denbigh. "He was born at Llansanan, in this county. He was a man of ingenuity, considerable learning, and noted piety, and a very useful and successful schoolmaster. He refused orders and preferment, which were offered him if he would conform. He was awhile connived at in keeping a private school at Henllan, but at length was hunted from thence. He had a vein of poetry in Latin, English, and Welsh. He died at Denbigh, August 15, 1673. Mr. Roberts, the conforming minister of the town, preached his funeral sermon, from those words of the Psalmist—*Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech*, &c. He translated several books into Welsh, particularly Mr. Baxter's 'Call to the Unconverted,' and his 'Now or Never;'"² to which may be added Gouge's "Christian Directions to Walk with God," published after the translator's death, in 1675.

Mr. RICHARD TAYLOR, ejected from Holt, was educated at Oxford, under Mr. Samuel Jones, afterwards of Brynllwarch, in Glamorganshire. "He settled at this place in 1659, when he was very young. After being silenced he continued preaching twelve months in the church gratis, by connivance. He then removed to London, and at length was pastor of a congregation at Barking, in Essex, probably as successor to Edward Keightley. He evidently held a very high position in the parish of Barking, and was a man of wealth and influence. He died August 12, 1697, and was buried near the pulpit in the chancel of Barking church, where his gravestone still remains, with the inscription, 'Here lieth the mortal part of Mr. Richard Taylor, clerk, who died August 12, 1697. *In cælo quies.*'"³

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. pp. 477-8.

² Calamy's Account, vol. ii. p. 844.

³ David's "Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in Essex," p. 629.

MR. JONATHAN ROBERTS, A.M., was ejected from Llanvair, Dyffrynclwyd. Mr. Phillip Henry gives him the following character :—"Mr. Jonathan Roberts, of Llanvair, in Denbighshire, my dear and precious friend, and a faithful minister of Christ, died at Mr. Titus Thomas's house, in West Felton, and was buried there September 26, 1684. A true Nathanael, *an Israelite indeed*, for plainness and integrity; a silent sufferer for his Nonconformity, for which he quitted a good living in Denbighshire. He was a learned man, a Master of Arts at Oxford; he died with comfort in his Nonconformity, and with a confidence of a return of mercy in God's due time. The summer before he died he had been at Oxford, Cambridge, and London, where he heard and saw that which much confirmed him in his dissent."¹ We learn, from an elegy on his death by Mr. Matthew Henry, that he had often been troubled with writs, and that he could have no rest at his own home, which probably accounts for the fact of his dying at a friend's house.²

MR. ELLIS ROWLANDS was ejected from Ruthin. "At the time of his ejection he was occasionally in Caernarvonshire, and was there hauled out of the pulpit as he was preaching. He was a laborious, worthy man; but after being silenced he was reduced to extreme necessities, and a collection was made for him at Denbigh. His wife kept a school in Caernarvonshire for a livelihood, and he drew patterns for the girls to work by. He could not be permitted a quiet abode, but was forced to flee into Cheshire. He died a Nonconformist, about the year 1683."³ Dr. Walker says that he held the rectory of Clynog, in Caernarvonshire, in 1657. It is possible that that was the place in which he was dragged out of the pulpit.

MR. AMBROSE MOSTYN was ejected from Wrexham. See Chapter I.

MR. AMBROSE LEWIS, of Wrexham, was a candidate for the ministry when the Act of Uniformity was passed. He was one of Mr. Phillip Henry's intimate friends, and preached for him at Worthenbury, once a month, for some years. Mr.

¹ M. Henry's "Miscellaneous Works," vol. i. p. 147, ed. 1833.

² Ibid. vol. i. pp. 222-3.

³ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 478.

Henry says of him, "Mr. Lewis is a godly man, a scholar, intending the ministry, approved of by those who are able to judge; desired often by Mr. Fogg himself to preach, and by others."¹ In a letter of Mr. James Owen's to Mr. Phillip Henry, dated November 26, 1691, Mr. Lewis is mentioned as then preaching at Wrexham, and that is the last account of him which we have.

Mr. JENKINS, of Gresford, afterwards conformed.

FLINTSHIRE.

Mr. ROBERT FOGG was ejected from Bangor at the Restoration. "He was a strong man, of a stern countenance, of warm passions, and of a bold and zealous spirit. He had some particular fancies; but his piety was very eminent. About the year 1660, a person came to him to have his child baptized, and would have it crossed; upon which he pleasantly said to the man, 'I will not cross it; but if you will go to my son Rowland, he will cross it, and cross thee, and cross me too.' He died most happily at Nantwich, April 21, 1676, aged 80, and was buried at Acton."²

Mr. RICHARD STEEL, A.M., was ejected from Hanmere. He was born near Nantwich, in Cheshire, May 10, 1629, and was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. On the 5th of July, 1656, he was incorporated into the University of Oxford. He laboured with great success in the work of the ministry in various places, till the providence of God fixed him in the living of Hanmere. He went on comfortably in his work at that place until the Restoration, when his troubles began. When the Act of Uniformity came in force, he was compelled to quit the living. He was several times imprisoned, and grievously annoyed in various other ways. About 1667 he removed to London, where he gathered a congregation, which met for several years at Armourers' Hall, Coleman Street. He finished his useful career on the 16th of November, 1692. Mr. Steel was an intimate friend of Mr. Phillip Henry. He assisted at his ordination, and afterwards at the ordination

¹ M. Henry's "Miscellaneous Works," vol. i. pp. 29, 215.

² Palmer, vol. iii. p. 478.

of his son, Mr. M. Henry.¹ Mr. Steel is the author of several valuable works; a list of them is given by Wilson.

Mr. PHILLIP HENRY, A.M., was ejected from Worthenbury. He was born in London, August 24, 1632. His father, Mr. John Henry, was the son of Mr. Henry Williams, of Britton Ferry, near Neath, Glamorganshire. As the history of this seraphic man is so well known, we need not give any further account of him here. He finished his course in peace on the 24th of June, 1696.

One Mr. JOHN BROSTER, in this county, was for some time a Nonconformist, but afterwards conformed.

GLAMORGANSHIRE.

Mr. JOSHUA MILLER was ejected from St. Andrew's. He had been a London bookseller, but was ejected merely because he could not conform.²

Mr. JENKIN JONES was ejected from Cadoxton, near Neath. See Chapter II.

Mr. THOMAS PROUD, ejected from Cheriton, was an Antipædobaptist. He accompanied Mr. John Myles to London in 1649; and, on their return, assisted him in forming a strict communion church at Ilston. This is all the account we are able to give of him.

Mr. EDMUND ELLIS, ejected from St. Fagan's, near Cardiff, had been a skinner in London; but it is evident that he was a talented man, for, according to Dr. Walker (part ii. p. 301), the sequestrators allowed him a hundred pounds a year for serving this parish. The labourers sent out as itinerant preachers did not receive above twenty or thirty pounds a year. Another proof that he was not an ordinary man is the fact of his being one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales.

Mr. JOHN MYLES was ejected from Ilston in 1660. See Chapter II.

Mr. HOWELL THOMAS, ejected from Glyncorwg, was an Antipædobaptist. Dr. Calamy says that he turned out a

¹ Wilson's "Dissenting Churches," vol. ii. pp. 448-456.

² Palmer, vol. iii. p. 500.

drunkard ; but it seems that he afterwards became a sober man, for he is named, in 1675, as a teacher in the Antipædobaptist church in the western part of Glamorganshire.¹

Mr. THOMAS JOSEPH was ejected from Llangeinwr. He was also an Antipædobaptist, and a teacher in the church in the western part of Glamorganshire, in 1675. Dr. Calamy says of him, that "he spoiled an ingenious husbandman to become an ignorant preacher, and yet it was only for Nonconformity that he was ejected."²

Mr. MORGAN JONES, ejected from Llanmadock, was an Antipædobaptist and a member of Mr. John Myles's church. Dr. Calamy calls him "an honest ploughman," and says, "Had he been cast out for insufficiency, there had been no room for complaint." Mr. J. Thomas, in his "History of the Baptists," says that he lived at a place called Alltfawr, in the parish of Llanon, Caermarthenshire, and both Mr. Thomas and Dr. Richards suppose that he was a very learned man. There was another Morgan Jones belonging to Mr. Myles's church, and Dr. Walker says that he supplied the parish of Laleston, near Bridgend. He probably died before the Restoration, or conformed, as several of the itinerant preachers did. The history of Mr. Morgan Jones, of Llanmadock, after his ejectment, is unknown.³

Mr. SAMUEL JONES, A.M., was ejected from Llangynwyd. See the sketches at the end of this chapter.

Mr. HENRY WILLIAMS was ejected from Llantrissant. "An honest man, but weak. He would take no tithes, and so received £60 per annum from the Exchequer."⁴ He was assistant minister in the Nonconformist church at Merthyr Tydvil as late as the year 1675. It is not known when he died. The Lambeth MSS. refer to him as Harry William Thomas, who had been a captain in the army of the Parliament, and as one who knew only the Welsh language.

¹ "Broadmead Records," p. 514.

² Calamy, vol. ii. p. 732.

³ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 316-17 ; Richards's "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial," pp. 289, &c.

⁴ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 502.

Mr. JOHN POWELL, A.M., was ejected from St. Lythian. He was the son of Howell Powell, of Tythegston, near Bridgend. In the eighteenth year of his age he entered the University of Oxford, and matriculated at Edmund Hall, on the 8th of May, 1635. "He was turned out in 1660 for not burying a gentleman's son according to the liturgy. Dr. Lloyd, Bishop of Llandaff, afterwards offered him his choice of two places, if he would have conformed, to which he could not be satisfied to yield. He was a meek, self-denying man, and a very affectionate preacher." He faithfully exercised his ministry, during the heat of persecution, in the parishes of Llanedern, Eglwysilan, Bedwas, Mynyddislwyn, and other places in the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan. We find his name mentioned as a teaching elder in the Congregational church at Mynyddislwyn in 1675. He suffered much; but death removed him to a better world on the 30th of April, 1691. Some of his children inherited a blessing.¹

Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS, A.M., of Jesus College, Oxford, was ejected from St. Mary's Church, near Bridgend. "A man of eminent piety and learning. He afterwards kept a school at Swansea."²

Mr. DANIEL HIGGS, A.M., was ejected in 1661 from Rhos Sili; and afterwards, in 1662, from Porteinon. He was born at Chadwich, in Worcestershire. "On his last ejection he was forced to leave his house, and wife, and seven children. To avoid the fury of the mob, he retired to his father's, in Worcestershire. His father told him he must expect no assistance or encouragement from him, unless he would conform, and urged upon him the strongest arguments he could think of; telling him how miserable and abject a life he must expect to lead, and what contempt he would fall under if he did not, &c. He replied 'that he would a thousand times rather trust himself and his family with Divine Providence, than offer to conform contrary to his conscience.' He was once in prison for Nonconformity. When the storm was blown over, he became pastor to a dissenting congregation at Swansea, who had a strong affection for him. He was a good

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 503.

² Ibid.

scholar, a judicious preacher, a vigilant pastor, and a strict observer of church discipline. He was indefatigable in his Master's work at Swansea and the neighbouring parts. He preached constantly once a month at a place about ten miles off. Once as he was riding thither, having prepared a discourse, his thoughts were so fixed on another subject that he could not get it out of his mind: upon which he resolved to preach upon it; and that proved one of the most successful sermons for doing good to souls that he ever preached. His hard study and labours at length brought on him such disorders and weakness, as almost incapacitated him for public service; so that he left his people, and retired into Worcestershire. But there, though his disorder confined him, so desirous was he of advancing the public welfare, that he undertook to teach academical learning, in which he took great delight, and had good success. His indisposition at length wearing off, his people at Swansea earnestly desired his return; and he, willing to serve God and them to the utmost of his ability, complied. Not being able to go by land, he went by sea. But the return of his illness soon obliged him to take his final leave of them. He again retired into his own country, and preached as long as he could amongst his neighbours in his own house, and died in September, 1691. A clergyman of the Church of England gave this character of him to one from whom Dr. Calamy received it: 'That he was one of the best scholars, philosophers, and divines that he ever had the happiness to be acquainted with.'"¹

Mr. MARMADUKE MATTHEWS was ejected from St. John's, Swansea. See Chapter I.

Mr. JOHN FRENCH, ejected from Wenvoe, was a native of Cardiff. "He was a good scholar, and substantial preacher, but very defective in his delivery. After his ejection he practised physic at Cardiff with good success. He always attended the public worship of the church, and afterwards preached at his own house. He died February 28, 1691."²

Mr. GEORGE SEAL was a preacher in this county before the Uniformity Act took place, and a schoolmaster at Cardiff.

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. pp. 503-4.

² Ibid. vol. iii. p. 505.

Some time after his ejection he became pastor of a congregation at Marshfield, in Gloucestershire."¹

Mr. ROBERT THOMAS, of Baglan, near Neath, was silenced by the Act of Uniformity. He afterwards became the pastor of the Congregational churches at Neath, Blaengwrach, Llan-gafelach, &c. He discharged his pastoral duties faithfully for above twenty years, and died about the year 1693. Some of the churches under his care were made up of "Independents, Anabaptists, and Catabaptists."²

Mr. JACOB CHRISTOPHER was another public preacher silenced by the Act of Uniformity. He was a teaching elder in Mr. Robert Thomas's churches in 1675. This is all the account we can give of him.³

Mr. RICHARD CRADOCK. He lived in the parish of Newton Nottage, and preached in his own house in the time of persecution. He was also a teaching elder in Mr. Robert Thomas's churches in 1675.⁴

Mr. DAVID DAVIES resided at Neath when the Act of Uniformity came into force. He was an Antipædobaptist, and was admitted a member of Mr. John Myles's church in the year 1649-50. He was a public preacher some years before this; for, according to Dr. Walker (part ii. p. 228), he was chosen by the parishioners of Gellygaer to be the minister of that parish, and to be supported by their free contributions, about the year 1645, or soon after. It appears that his connection with the parish of Gellygaer as its minister terminated when he joined the Antipædobaptist church at Ilston; for we find him afterwards appointed by the Association to preach and visit the newly formed churches in different counties. Mr. William Erbery gives some account of a discussion he had with Davies at Llantrissant, in Glamorganshire. What became of him after 1662 we know not.⁵

Mr. THOMAS JONES was another worthy man of the Anti-

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 505.

² Hanes Crefydd yn Nghymru, gan D. Peter, p. 601.

³ The Lambeth MSS. vol. 639; "Broadmead Records," p. 514.

⁴ Ibid. p. 514.

⁵ Thomas's "History of the Association," pp. 6, 7, 19; Erbery's "Testimony," p. 219.

pædobaptist denomination. It does not appear that he ever settled as the minister of any parish; but after the Restoration he became the pastor of the church which then met at Llantrissant, Craig yr Allt, in the parish of Eglwysilan, Gellygaer, and Llanvabon, in Glamorganshire. He is described as "an honest, moderate, useful man." He died in 1674.¹

Mr. LEWIS THOMAS, of the Moor, in the parish of Newton Nottage, was an excellent man, and a great sufferer for Nonconformity. He was for above forty years the leading pastor of the Antipædobaptist church which met at Swansea and other places in the western part of Glamorganshire. He died on the 2nd of March, 1703.²

Mr. ROBERT MORGAN, of Llandilo Talybout, was co-pastor with Mr. Lewis Thomas. We find his name in the records of the Antipædobaptist Association as early as the year 1653. He died in the year 1711, aged 90 years.³

Mr. EVAN LLEWELLYN was ejected from a school at Swansea for Nonconformity. It is not known whether he was a preacher or not.⁴

Mr. EVAN GRIFFITHS, of Oxwich, was ejected, but soon after conformed, and became a violent persecutor of the Dissenters. Mr. Pye, of Bishopston, Mr. Rees Davies, of St. Mary-on-the Hill, Mr. Hilliar, of Newton Nottage, and Mr. Henry Nichols, of Coychurch, also conformed, and were restored to their livings.⁵

MERIONETHSHIRE.

Mr. HUGH OWEN, of Bronyclydwr, was the only Nonconformist in this county. See Chapter IV.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

Mr. JOHN ABBOT was ejected from St. Mary's, Abergavenny. He was an Antipædobaptist, and took a part in the baptismal discussion held in that town in 1653.

Mr. GEORGE ROBINSON was ejected from Caerleon. He is one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the

¹ "Broadmead Records," p. 515.

² "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 284.

³ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 318.

⁴ Calamy's Account, vol. ii. p. 844.

⁵ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 505.

Gospel in Wales. In 1672 he had a license to preach as a Congregationalist at the house of George Morgan, of Llantrissant, Monmouthshire. We have no further account to give of him.

Mr. HOPKIN ROGERS was ejected from Caerwent. He is mentioned in the Lambeth MSS. as a teacher in the "conventicles" held in this county in 1669. He probably died before 1672, for his name is not in the list of those who applied for licenses to preach in that year.

Mr. OWEN MORGAN was ejected from a place which Calamy and Palmer write *Llanavering*, but there is not a parish of that name in the county; *Llanvertherine* was probably the place they meant. Mr. Morgan's name is mentioned in the "Examen et Purgamen Vavasis."

Mr. ROBINS was ejected from Llangattock. There are several parishes of this name in the county. It cannot now be ascertained from which of them Mr. Robins was ejected.

Mr. WILLIAMS was ejected from Llanvapley. He is probably the "Charles Williams, a felt maker, from Monmouth," whom Dr. Walker repeatedly sneers at.

Mr. THOMAS BARNES was ejected from Magor. "He was sent from the church at Allhallows, in London, to preach the Gospel in Wales." After his ejection he became the pastor of the Congregational church formed at Llanvaches in 1639, many, if not the majority of whose members lived in the parish of Magor and the adjoining parishes, and continued in that capacity till his death in 1703. On Dr. Owen's death he was invited to return to London to succeed him, but he preferred to remain with his persecuted flock in the country. The Congregational Fund Board most liberally supported him in his declining years. The gentry and the clergy much honoured him for refusing to petition King James against the Test. He was a man of good sense, of great integrity, and self-denial.¹

Mr. NICHOLAS CARY was ejected from Monmouth. "After his ejection he went to London, and gave himself up to the study and practice of physic. He had peculiar success in curing disorders in the eye and ear. He died in Hatton Garden."²

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. pp. 505-6. The Records of the Congregational Fund Board.

² Ibid. p. 506.

Mr. HENRY WALTER was ejected from Newport. See Chapter I.

Mr. WALTER PROSSER, ejected from Tredynock, was an Antipædobaptist. He was the pastor of the newly formed church at Hay, in Breconshire, in 1653, but was considered unsuitable for that locality on account of his not being able to preach in the English language. He probably died about 1670 or soon after, for his name is not to be found in any record of a later date than 1669.¹

Mr. SIMMS was ejected from Trelech. His name is mentioned in Besse's "Sufferings of the Quakers" as one who treated some persons of that persuasion unkindly.

Mr. WILLIAM MILLMAN was ejected from some parish in this county. He is mentioned in the Lambeth MSS. as "one William Millman, of Magor, a Sabbatarian Anabaptist." Dr. Calamy says that he settled some years after his ejection at Tintern, and that he died there. His death occurred some time after the year 1690, for he is mentioned then as assistant to Mr. Quarrell, at Llantrissant and Llangwm.²

Mr. WATKIN JONES, of Sychbant, in the parish of Mynyddislwyn, was "a man of substance and learning, and of a creditable family." He was for some years the assistant of Mr. Henry Walter, at Newport, Mynyddislwyn, and Bedwas. In 1668 he became the pastor of that part of Mr. Walter's church which met at Gellygrug, in the parish of Aberystroth. This church consisted of "a mixture of Independents and Baptists, who lovingly met together in the service of God, until one Jenkin John, or John Jenkin, a man with one eye, from Merthyr Tydvil, came among them, and persuaded the Baptists to separate from the Independents, much against the minds of the Independents, who were sorry for the separation. The Baptists afterwards met by themselves at the house of Nest John Rosser, and the Independents continued to meet at Gellygrug until the death of Mr. Watkin Jones, their pastor, which took place some time after the year 1692."³

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 315.

² Thomas's "History of the Association," p. 22.

³ Jones's "History of the Parish of Aberystroth," pp. 97, 98.

Mr. CHRISTOPHER PRICE, of Llanfoist, near Abergavenny, was an excellent man of the Antipædobaptist persuasion. Being by profession a physician, he was generally styled Dr. Price. It does not appear that he ever held any living as the minister of a parish, but he began to preach about the year 1650, and adhered to his principles as a Nonconformist, through all the heat of persecution, until his death, which took place in the year 1697. Dr. Price never joined the strict communion party, headed by Mr. Myles, though he coincided with their views of the subjects and mode of baptism.¹

Mr. WILLIAM JOHN PRICHARD, of Abergavenny, was the first pastor of the Antipædobaptist church at Llanwenarth near that town. He was ordained in the year 1653. It appears that he was an educated man. He was a strict communionist, and after the emigration of Mr. Myles to New England he became the leading man in the denomination. He died about the year 1708.²

Mr. RICE WILLIAMS, of Newport, was a gentleman of high standing. He was not educated for the ministry, but it appears that he often exercised his gifts as a preacher. Mr. Walter Cradock, in a letter to Cromwell, dated March 29, 1652, describes him as "that renowned ancient saint, Mr. Rice Williams, of Newport, being one who hath served the State in many places; but not gained a penny therefrom." He is one of the commissioners in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. In 1669 "a conventicle" was regularly held at his house, and he is mentioned as one of the teachers. He probably died soon after that date.³

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

Mr. GABRIEL JONES was ejected from Bettws.

Mr. MARTIN GRUNDMAN was ejected from Llandysil. "Being in London at the time of the plague, he was so poor that he was not able to remove his family, and was carried off by it. He was a very holy, humble man, and an able minister."

¹ Thomas's "History of the Association," p. 28.

² "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 186.

³ Lambeth MSS. vol. 639. "Letters addressed to Oliver Cromwell," p. 83.

Mr. HUGH ROGERS was ejected from Newtown. Mr. Phillip Henry gives him the following character : "Mr. Hugh Rogers, a worthy, faithful minister of Jesus Christ, turned out for Non-conformity from Newtown, in Montgomeryshire, was buried at Welshpool, March 17, 1680. He was looked upon as Congregational ; but his declared judgment was—' That ministers ought to be ordained by ministers, and to give themselves wholly to that work ; and that none but ministers have authority to preach and govern in a constituted church ; and that Christ's ministers are His ministers in all places ; and that where the Word of Christ is preached, and His sacraments administered, there is a true church.' He was a man of excellent converse, and whose peculiar felicity lay in pleasant and edifying discourse." ¹

Mr. NATHANIEL RAVENS was ejected from Welshpool.

Mr. HENRY WILLIAMS, of the Yscafell, near Newtown, was an itinerant preacher. "Being disabled from the public exercise of his ministry in 1662, he continued to preach more privately in several parts of this county as he had opportunity. He was an upright man, very active for God, and a lively preacher. He suffered much for the sake of a good conscience, both by imprisonments and spoiling of his goods ; but he endured all patiently, and went on doing the work of the Lord in the most difficult times. He subsisted on a small estate of his own, and preached the Gospel freely to such as were willing to receive it. He died about 1685, aged about 60." ² His daughter Rosamond was the wife (not the mother, as Mr. Palmer says) of the celebrated Richard Davies, of Rowell, Northamptonshire. Mr. Davies published an elegy on the death of his father-in-law, in which several remarkable facts respecting his unparalleled sufferings, and the interposition of Providence in his behalf, are recorded. These startling facts will come under our notice in a subsequent part of this chapter.

Mr. Joshua Thomas, and several other writers on his authority, have asserted that Mr. Williams was an Antipædobaptist, but we have not yet seen any satisfactory proof of that assertion.

¹ Henry's "Miscellaneous Works," vol. i. p. 146.

² Palmer, vol. iii. p. 494.

MR. VAVASOR POWELL was silenced in this county. See Chapter II.

MR. JAMES QUARRELL was an itinerant preacher in this and several of the adjoining counties. He, and not Mr. Thomas Quarrell, as Mr. Palmer says, was the first pastor of the Congregational Church at Shrewsbury. It is not probable that he was there in that capacity "in Oliver's time," as he was then fully employed as an itinerant preacher in Wales. He was one of the authors of the pamphlet entitled "*Examen et Purgamen Vavasoris.*" Mr. V. Powell's first wife was the widow of Mr. Paul Quarrell, of Presteigne. Mr. James Quarrell was most probably a near relation of Mr. P. Quarrell. This good man, like most of his brethren, had his share of persecution. We find in a letter from Lord Newport to Sir Richard Ottley, an order to "apprehend and deliver to the Provost-Marshal, Mr. Quarrell, of Welsh Felton, a priest, to be by him secured till further orders."¹ We know not whether this order was executed or not. Mr. Quarrell continued the pastor of the church at Shrewsbury for several years. In the year 1672, and probably for a year or two before, he had the pious Henry Maurice for his colleague. He often made preaching tours in Wales while residing at Shrewsbury. The last notice we have of him is in the account of the recognition of Mr. Henry Williams as pastor of the church in Montgomeryshire, on the 28th of August, 1672, where he offered the recognition prayer. He probably died soon after that time.² Several persons of the surname of Quarrell were members of the Independent church at Shrewsbury in the last century, who were probably his descendants.

MR. THOMAS QUARRELL, probably a brother of the preceding, was an itinerant preacher in the counties of Montgomery and Radnor. Some time after 1662 he settled at Whitchurch, near Cardiff, and was very diligent in preaching the gospel in different parts of the counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth, chiefly in connection with Mr. John Powell, A.M. During the heat of persecution, some time between 1672 and 1675, he became the pastor of the church at Llantrissant and

¹ Owen and Blakeway's "*History of Shrewsbury*," vol. ii. p. 482.

² Orig. MS. of Henry Maurice.

Llangwm, in Monmouthshire. That church then "consisted mostly, if not almost all, of Baptists, but they were in judgment for free communion." It is doubtful whether Mr. Quarrell himself was an Antipædobaptist, but his colleagues, Dr. Price and Mr. Millman, were. In his latter days he had a very popular Independent minister for his co-pastor. His name was Hugh Pugh. He was educated under Mr. Samuel Jones, of Brynllwarch, and was one of the most popular preachers of the age. He died very young, about 1709; and Mr. Quarrell died about the same time, at an advanced age.⁷

Mr. JOHN EVANS, son of Mr. Matthew Evans, "was born at Great Sutton, near Ludlow. His father and grandfather were successively rectors of Penegos, near Machynlleth, in this county. He was educated at Balliol College, Oxford. He left the University sooner than he intended because he was unwilling to submit to the Parliamentary visitors. Returning to his father in Wales, he was ordained presbyter at Brecon by Dr. Mainwaring, Bishop of St. David's, November 28, 1648; but soon after he saw reason to alter his thoughts about Conformity, upon which some papers passed between him and his father, who was very zealous for the hierarchy. He was admitted one of the itinerant preachers of Wales, and was successively master of the free schools of Dolgelly and Oswestry, in which last place the Act of Uniformity found him. When he was ejected, he and his family were reduced to low circumstances; and his necessities were once so great, that he was forced to sell a considerable part of a large library for present maintenance.

"In 1668 he was chosen pastor of an Independent church at Wrexham, and kept private assemblies in his house or neighbourhood through most of the hottest times. Some gentlemen of considerable rank (knowing his abilities in school learning) sent their sons to board with him for several years, which was some relief to him under violent prosecutions. About the year 1681 he was earnestly pressed to conform by the Bishop of the diocese, Dr. W. Lloyd, who at first expressed a particular

⁷ Lambeth MSS. vol. 639. "The Records of the Congregational Fund Board;" and "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 270.

regard to him, and offered him a very good living ; but upon his positive refusal he prosecuted him with severity, and upon his personal soliciting against the Bishop in open court the magistrate imposed heavy fines from time to time, and he was sued to an outlawry. But it was remarkable, that though these measures obliged him to keep his doors constantly locked for some years, he escaped better than many who were not so eagerly pursued—the most officious informers not being able to gather one of the fines laid upon him. Nor was his person ever seized but once upon the road (notwithstanding frequent warrants), and then he was soon released by the mediation of a person of honour, who often generously took his part. There was reason to think that his hardships, and the frequent journeys he was forced to take by night, impaired his health, and brought on that weakness under which he soon after laboured. He was a man of good learning, great gravity and seriousness, of a most unblameable conversation, and a laborious and judicious preacher.”¹

Mrs. Evans, his second wife, was the daughter of Colonel Gerrard, Governor of Chester Castle, and the widow of the famous Vavasor Powell ; a woman of an excellent spirit, and of a strong understanding. Their son, Dr. John Evans, was the author of the well-known sermons on the Christian Temper. Mr. Evans was a strict “Congregationalist, and a high Dissenter.” Mr. Matthew Henry has thus recorded the termination of his course, which event took place on the 16th of July, 1700:—“A little while before he died, which was in his seventy-second year, he spoke with more apprehension than usual, rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Rock ; and when it was said to him that he was going to his Father’s house, he cheerfully answered—‘It will not be well with me till I am there.’ Some present desired him to leave some good counsel with them ; to whom he replied—‘Go to God by prayer.’” Mr. David Jones, the pastor of the Congregational church at Shrewsbury, preached his funeral sermon from Acts xxi. 14.²

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. pp. 523-4.

² Henry’s “Miscellaneous Works,” vol. i. p. 186. Williams’ “Life of M. Henry,” p. 342.

MR. DAVID AP HUGH was converted under the ministry of Mr. Walter Cradock, while at Wrexham, about the year 1635. He is mentioned in Mr. V. Powell's life (p. 123) as remarkable for his faith in prayer ; and by another author he is described as an " eminent saint, and a famous preacher." This is all the information we have respecting him.¹

MR. ROWLAND NEVET, A.M., was ejected from Oswestry. He was an Englishman, but having taken an active part in the religious transactions of the Principality, and being ejected in a Welsh diocese, he may with propriety be classed with the Welsh Nonconformists. " He was born in the parish of Hodnet, Shropshire, and was educated first at Shrewsbury school, and afterwards at Edmund Hall, Oxford, where he took his degree of Master of Arts in 1634. He was episcopally ordained ; and in 1635 he was presented to the vicarage of Stanton, in Shropshire, where he continued many years with great success in his ministry. After the war he removed to Oswestry, where he laboured abundantly in the work of the Lord ; and even after he was silenced he continued among his people there to his dying day, doing what he could when he might not do what he would. He would say he thought most of his converting work was done at Oswestry the first seven years of his being there. He loved to preach, and to hear others preach, concerning the great things of religion, redemption, reconciliation, regeneration, &c. ; for these, said he, are the main matter. When the plague was at Oswestry he continued with his people, and preached to them ; and it was an opportunity of doing much good.

His conversation from his youth was not only blameless, but holy and pious ; he was exemplary for family religion and great care and industry in the education of his children. He was looked upon as *Congregational* in judgment and practice, and was not satisfied to join in the Common Prayer ; but was free to communicate with those that did. He greatly bewailed the divisions of the church, and the intemperate heat of some of all persuasions. He was exceedingly kind and loving to his friends ; very frequent in pious ejaculations to God. Being

¹ Jones's " Life of Evan Williams," p. 87.

often distempered in body, he would say he was never better than in the pulpit, and that it was the best place he could wish to die in. He often blessed God for a fit of sickness which he had, which he said he would not have been without for a world—the foundation of his comfort and hope of heaven being laid there. When he was some time much spent with his labours he would appeal to God, that though he might be wearied in His service, he would never be weary of it. His dying prayer for his children, after many sweet exhortations, was, that the Mediator's blessing might be the portion of every one of them; adding, 'I charge you all, see to it that you meet me at the right hand of Christ at the great day.' A little before he died, he had this expression—"Go forth, my soul—go forth to meet thy God!" adding by and by, 'It is now done. *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.*' One present saying to him that he was going to receive his reward, he replied, '*It is free grace.*'" He died December 8, 1675, and Mr. Phillip Henry preached his funeral sermon from 2 Peter i. 14.¹

Mr. Nevet is one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales.

Mr. TIMOTHY THOMAS was ejected from Morton. He afterwards became chaplain to Mrs. Baker, of Swinney, near Oswestry, where he died in 1676, and was succeeded at Swinney by Mr. James Owen. Mr. Thomas was married to a daughter of Mr. John Evans, of Wrexham. A son of his, born some months after his death, was named Timothy, and in course of time became an Antipædobaptist minister at Pershore, in Worcestershire, where he was succeeded by his son, of the same name.²

Mr. TITUS THOMAS, ejected from Aston, near Oswestry, was the brother of the preceding. Some time after his ejection he became the pastor of the Independent church at Shrewsbury, as the successor of Mr. James Quarrell. Mr. Phillip Henry says that "he was a worthy, good man, and not so straight-laced as some others." Dr. Calamy characterizes him as "an ingenious and learned man." He was famous for

¹ Henry's "Miscellaneous Works," vol. i. pp. 144-5.

² "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 148.

his piety, zeal, and usefulness. He died in December, 1686.¹

Mr. JOHN WILLIAMS, commonly called Captain Williams, having been for some time a captain in the army, was a very popular itinerant preacher. It appears that he had also been a Member of Parliament for one of the Welsh counties. He joined Mr. V. Powell in the protest against Cromwell's policy. It seems that he exercised his ministry chiefly in the counties of Montgomery, Radnor, and Denbigh. Llangollen, in Denbighshire, was the place of his residence during the latter part of his life. He was a great sufferer after the Restoration. The time of his death is unknown. "His death was attended with very brutal circumstances. The corpse was carried to the churchyard, and buried there; but it was soon after dug up by his savage enemies, so that his friends had afterwards to perform the painful office of re-interring it, which was done privately in his own garden." His son, of the same name, was for some years the pastor of the Congregational church at Wrexham, and about 1715 became an Antipædobaptist. He died at Wrexham in 1725.²

PEMBROKESHIRE.

Mr. THOMAS HUGHES was ejected from Bugeli.

Mr. ADAM HAWKINS was ejected from St. Ismael. He was alive in the year 1669, and "lived quietly and favourably in the country, in relation to both Church and State."³

Mr. PEREGRINE PHILLIPS was ejected from Llangwm and Freystrop. See the biographical sketches at the end of this chapter.

Mr. CHRISTOPHER JACKSON was ejected from Llanbedr. He died in London.⁴

Mr. JOHN LUNTLEY was ejected from Llanstadwell and Nolton. "After his ejectment he assisted Mr. P. Phillips in

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 139; Henry's "Works," vol. i. p. 147.

² Thurloe's State Papers, vol. ii. p. 45, &c.; Welsh "Nonconformist Memorial," pp. 151-2; "Hanes y Bedyddwyr, p. 152.

³ Lambeth MSS. vol. 639.

⁴ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 508.

the congregation at Haverfordwest, and his ministry was well approved. He died about the year 1672."¹

Mr. MORGAN THOMAS was ejected from Mathry.

Mr. JOHN BYWATER was ejected from Pembroke.

Mr. JOHN CARVER was ejected from Tenby.

Mr. Stephen Young, of Rhos Gylyddwr; Mr. David Williams, of Llanfihangel penbedw; and Mr. Thomas Freeman, after their ejection, conformed, and were restored to their livings.

RADNORSHIRE.

Mr. JOHN WEAVER was ejected from Radnor in 1660, and from a neighbouring parish in 1662. He was born at or near Ludlow, and was educated either at Oxford or Cambridge. He settled at Radnor in 1652. After his ejection in 1662 he continued to preach in those parts to a private congregation during the reigns of Charles II. and James II. Upon the death of Mr. Primrose, he had a pressing invitation to remove to Hereford, with which he reluctantly complied; but he was several times uneasy there, and felt a desire to return to his old station. However, he was detained and encouraged there by Sir Edward Harley, after whose death there were great feuds between him and the people; yet he continued preaching there to a small congregation till his death in 1712, when he was about eighty years of age. During his pastorate at Hereford he occasionally visited the church at Abergavenny. He was a considerable man; but by many reckoned too severe. He had a very strong memory, and retained things and words too very exactly for many years. He met with such difficulties that he was obliged to sell part of his estate to maintain his family; but Providence made it up to him by his daughter's marrying a Mr. Jones, who was a man of large property, and who declared he was the more willing to marry her that he might, in the most respectable way, convey his wealth to Mr. Weaver's family. About the time of his daughter's marriage, having been ejected thirty-three years, he had lost £3,300, and that very sum God restored to the family by this son-in-law. Another of his daughters married the

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 508.

celebrated Samuel Jones, the tutor at Tewksbury, who had previously been a pupil of Mr. Weaver's.¹

Mr. RICHARD SWAINE was ejected from some parish in this county. We find his name amongst the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales. Mr. Baxter says that he was for some time a schoolmaster at Bridgnorth. He died at Shrewsbury, but the time of his death is unknown.²

Mr. DAVID JENKS, ejected from Bryngwyn and Newchurch, after being fifteen years a Dissenter, conformed; but lived the remainder of his days without any respect or honour.³

Mr. MORRIS GRIFFITH was a very active itinerant preacher in this and the adjoining counties, and was one of Mr. V. Powell's intimate friends. He was an elder in the Nonconformist church in this county in 1675. How long he lived after this time is unknown. We may infer, from the frequent references to him in Thurloe's State Papers, that he was a man of some standing.⁴

Mr. HENRY GREGORY was a young man just beginning to exercise his gifts as a preacher when the Act of Uniformity came in force. He was an Antipædobaptist, and probably also an Arminian; for we find that most of his people were of that persuasion. The church, over which he afterwards presided, met at Peter Gregory's house, in the parish of Llanddewi Ystradeni, in the western part of this county. Some of the members also resided in the northern part of Breconshire. Mr. Gregory was probably the only Arminian in Wales in that age. He died in the year 1700, aged sixty-three. His severe sufferings will come under our notice in a subsequent part of this chapter.⁵

To the foregoing list might be added a considerable number of pious and talented men, who, though not professed preachers, were accustomed to address congregations in the absence of

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 509; Calamy's "Account," vol. ii. p. 734.

² Calamy's Account, vol. ii. p. 734; Continuation, vol. ii. p. 849.

³ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 510.

⁴ "Broadmead Records," p. 518.

⁵ Ibid. p. 518; "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial," p. 237, &c.

ministers or regular itinerants, and on that account were called "exhorters or repeaters." Many of these worthy characters, during the persecuting times which followed, were called to the ministry, and became eminently useful.

The labours of the "propagators," or the itinerant preachers, during the interregnum, have often been sneered at and misrepresented as an "extirpation rather than a propagation of the gospel" in the Principality; but the fact that so many ministers and preachers, all of whom might have enjoyed comfortable livings in the Establishment, were found willing to sacrifice every worldly comfort for the sake of a good conscience, proves that the calumniated propagators did not labour altogether in vain. When King Charles I., in 1633, enforced the reading of the "Book of Sports," there were not half a dozen clergymen in the Principality who had either the piety or the manliness to withstand the monarch's impious injunction; but when King Charles II., in 1662, enforced the Act of Uniformity, we find amongst the Welsh ministers the respectable number of at least *one hundred and six* possessing sufficient firmness and self-denial to oppose the impertinent meddling of the King and his advisers with religious matters.

Hitherto we find the Welsh Nonconformists distinguished by no other names than Congregationalists or Independents, Antipædobaptists, and Friends or Quakers; but after 1662 some of the ejected ministers were designated *Presbyterians*, and they were such, at least in sentiment, though they never set up a distinct denomination, but always associated with the Congregationalists, under the general name of Protestant Dissenters. The Presbyterian element thus introduced led to some practices which strict Congregationalists could not have approved of; such as the ordaining of a number of ministers at one place who were intended to preside over different churches in other places, &c.; but no attempt was ever made to enforce Presbyterian discipline except at Henllan, in Caermarthenshire, about the year 1707, and it was then most resolutely opposed. The reader will therefore understand, when he meets with the word Presbyterian in the ensuing pages, that it only refers to *individuals* who entertained Presbyterian

sentiments, and not a distinct denomination, for such a denomination never existed in Wales. The fact is that the words Independent and Presbyterian were for ages used in the Principality as synonymous terms. The discipline of the churches has invariably been exercised on the Congregational or Independent principle, while several of them were Presbyterian in name.

The Act of Uniformity, while it most grievously affected the ministers, did not directly affect the people ; but they also had to smart under the provisions of the Conventicle Act, passed in the year 1664. That tyrannical ordinance decreed "that only five persons above sixteen years of age, besides the family, were to meet for any worship, domestic or social. For the first offence, on the part of him who officiated, the punishment was three months' imprisonment, or a fine of five pounds ; for the second, six months' imprisonment, or a fine of ten pounds ; for the third, transportation for life, or a fine of one hundred pounds. Those who permitted conventicles to be held in their barns, houses, or outhouses, were liable to the same forfeitures ; and married women taken at such meetings were to be imprisoned for twelve months, unless their husbands paid forty shillings for their redemption. The power of enforcing the Act was lodged in the hands of a single justice of the peace, who might proceed, without the verdict of a jury, on the bare oath of an informer. In consequence of this Act houses were broken open, goods and cattle distrained, persons arrested, and the gaols in the different counties filled with those who had been guilty of no other misdemeanour than that of assembling together to worship God." This ordinance was to be in force for only three years ; but it was again revived in the year 1669. In its new shape it inflicted a fine of five shillings on every hearer for the first, and ten shillings for the second offence ; twenty pounds each on the preacher and the owner of the house where the meeting was held ; and one hundred pounds on any magistrate who might have neglected to inflict the penalties at the request of an informer. Of these fines, one-third was to go to the informer, one-third to the King, and one-third to the poor ; but in most cases the informers and the magistrates took the whole spoil to themselves. This iniquitous

Act made the persons and property of all Nonconformists, and even of those magistrates who were not disposed to enforce the law against their harmless neighbours, the prey of the informers.

None but the vilest characters would have taken to the disreputable office of informers, but such were to be found in almost every parish. Some unprincipled magistrates co-operated with them, and found it a most lucrative trade; but God in many instances visited them with unmistakable marks of his displeasure.

In order to remove the ejected ministers from their flocks, and, if possible, to starve them to death, the Oxford, or Five Mile Act, was passed in the year 1665. This Act imposed an oath on all Nonconformists, binding them to attempt no alteration in either Church or State; and provided that all ministers who did not take it should neither live in, nor come within *five miles* (except in crossing the road) of any borough, city, or corporate town; or within five miles of any parish, town, or place, in which they had been parson, vicar, or lecturer, under a penalty of forty pounds; and being rendered incapable of teaching any school, or taking any boarders to be taught or instructed.

The forementioned, together with the Corporation and Test Acts, which incapacitated every consistent Nonconformist to hold any civil office, completed the infernal machinery of persecution invented by the Bishops and their party to crush Nonconformity.

The Welsh Nonconformists had their full share of ill-treatment under these Acts; but unfortunately only a few of the particulars of their sufferings have been recorded. The following facts cannot fail to be painfully interesting and instructive to the Nonconformists of the present age, as they show what storms their forefathers had to pass through in order to secure to them the privileges and liberty which they now enjoy.

About the close of the year 1662, a large number of Friends and other Nonconformists in Montgomeryshire were imprisoned and treated with savage cruelty. The following account is from the pen of one of these sufferers:—"These prisoners were kept very close; some of them were substantial freeholders, who were put into a dirty, nasty place near the stable and

house of office, being a low room ; the felons and malefactors in a chamber over head—their excrements, &c., often falling upon them. Charles Lloyd, who was a little before in the commission of the peace, was put in a little smoky room, and did lie upon a little straw himself for a considerable time ; and at length his tender wife, that was of a considerable family (daughter of Sampson Lort, near Pembroke, in South Wales), was made willing to lie upon straw with her dear and tender husband, and thus they both, with the rest of Friends, did rather choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.

“The sufferings of Friends now being very great, and still increasing, they sent the following paper to the Quarter Sessions held at Montgomery on the eighth day of the eleventh month, 1662 :—

“To the Justices and Magistrates of the County of Montgomery. Forasmuch as it is not unknown to you that we, who by the scornors of this world (that know not God) are called Quakers, are detained and kept close prisoners, only for the testimony of a good conscience towards God and man, our friends not being suffered to visit us, though drunkards, liars, thieves, and robbers, are not debarred of their friends’ admittance to them. This unheard-of cruelty were enough itself to establish us in our ways, if they were never so erroneous, as you say. This we are persuaded in our hearts, that never did Christ, or any of His apostles, use this, or any other way of cruelty or persecution, to convince any of their errors, but contrariwise, by sound doctrine, and good conversation, and doing unto others as they would they should do unto them ; for that was the rule that Christ left to true Christians. Now consider, in the soberness of your hearts and spirits, that if you were in our condition, would you not desire your enlargement? And seeing it is the King’s clemency, in a declaration bearing date the 26th day of December, 1662, wherein he says he is glad to lay hold on this occasion to re-establish and renew unto all his subjects concerned in those promises, indulged by a true tenderness of conscience, this assurance and confirmation of his promise made at Breda, upon the word of the King, viz :

—‘We do declare all liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of religion.’ And moreover he saith, in the same declaration—‘As for what concerns the penalties upon those who, living peaceably, do not conform thereunto through scruple and tenderness of misguided consciences, but modestly, without scandal, perform their devotions in their own way.’ We understand by these words, viz., that it is his fatherly care to publish this his declaration, to stop and prevent all other acting, according to former Acts made against liberty of tender consciences. And we hope that you will be as favourable to us, your neighbours (seeing power is committed to your hands), as the King, being chief magistrate, is unto his subjects. These things have we seen fit and convenient to lay before you, that you may understand we are not ignorant of the King’s clemency towards us. And we (whose names are underwritten) do wait the fulfilling and performing of this one other word more of a King, by you who profess yourselves to be his obedient and loyal subjects; notwithstanding all which former words and promises of the King, the supreme magistrate, we have been persecuted more by you, his inferior magistrates in this county, than in many other counties. And farther, that you may be left without excuse for that, if you do persecute us, it is without any cause from us, or any order from the supreme magistrate, the King of England. If you do justice herein the Lord will bless you; if not, sin will lie at your door. These from your friends, that desire the good and welfare of your souls and bodies, that have received the spirit of meekness; that can pray for them that persecute us, and despitefully use us, who in patience and longsuffering are content to submit to the will of God, who renders to every man according to the deeds done in the flesh.

“HUMPHREY WILSON,

“RICHARD DAVIES,

“EDWARD EVANS,

“CHARLES LLOYD

“HUGH DAVID,

“WILLIAM LEWIS,

SARAH WILSON,

MARGARET LEWES,

CATHERINE EVANS,

ANNE LAWRENCE.

"The jailor of Welsh-pool was very cruel to Friends, and continued them in that nasty hole before-mentioned, till Edward Evans fell sick, by reason of the dampness and unhealthiness of the room, and died; and the jailor would not suffer us to have his body to be buried, except we would pay the coroner, and so clear him, as if he had no hand in his death; but at last his relations prevailed without a coroner's inquest, and they took and buried him upon a hill, on the back side of the steeple-house in Welsh-pool. We had got no burying-place of our own then, but we were about having one. Thomas Lloyd and I not being prisoners now, though (except us two) most that were then convinced were prisoners; the report of such who were turned Quakers being spread abroad, they were soon sent for before a magistrate, and the oaths of allegiance and supremacy were tendered both to men and women; and they for conscience' sake refusing them, were sent to prison in order to be premunired."¹

Mr. John Williams, and the people who adhered to him about Pwllheli, in Caernarvonshire, were subjected to the most cruel persecutions. They had to pay fifty pounds twice for meeting to worship God at Capel Helyg, in the parish of Llanybi, and their cattle and goods were taken from them repeatedly. On one occasion a cruel magistrate, named Hugh Lloyd, sent officers to arrest a number of them at their meeting. They were dragged to the magistrate's house, a distance of fifteen miles, and kept there a whole day without food or drink. In the evening, they desired the servant to ask his master either to commit or release them, inasmuch as he had no law authorizing him to keep them there to die of hunger. When the servant told him what they said, he became so enraged that he died in a fit of passion. The poor sufferers were consequently set at liberty.²

Some time in the reign of James II., a meeting of ministers was to be held at Pwllheli. Seeing the threatening attitude of the mob, most of the ministers were afraid to engage in the service; but one courageous young man (supposed to be Mr.

¹ "Life of Richard Davies," pp. 40-42, 44.

² "Drych yr Amseroedd," pp. 20, 21.

Daniel Phillips, who afterwards exercised his ministry in that town for nearly forty years) said—"With your permission, brethren, I will venture to preach." Soon after he had announced his text one of the persecutors fired a gun at him. The ball passed within a hair's breadth of his head to the partition behind him. Perceiving his providential escape, he cried out—"In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me," and proceeded with his discourse undismayed.¹

Mr. Henry Williams, pastor of the Congregational church in Montgomeryshire, a laborious and useful minister, and one of the most amiable men that ever lived, was one of the greatest sufferers. "Among the severe sufferings and heavy trials which Mr. Williams underwent, the following have been related as some of the most remarkable. He was once set upon while preaching, dragged from the place where he stood, cruelly beaten, and left apparently dead, like Paul at Lystra. His imprisonments were long and rigorous, and are said to have taken up no less than *nine years*. At one of the times he lay in prison the bloody persecutors set fire to his house, and burned it to the ground. Another time they beset it, and broke in, and plundered his goods, and even *murdered his aged father*, who was attempting to prevent their getting into the upper rooms. His wife also, then pregnant, in endeavouring to make her escape, with one child in her arms and leading another, they cruelly insulted. At last they seized the stock upon the land, and seemed resolved to leave nothing behind them for the future subsistence of the family. There was, however, a field of wheat then just sown, which the unfeeling wretches could not carry off, and probably did not think worth their while to destroy. That field thrived amazingly. All the winter and spring its appearance struck every beholder, and the crop it produced was so very abundant as to become the common talk and wonder of the whole country. Nothing like it had ever been known in those parts. In short, the produce of that field amply repaid him for the losses of the preceding year. It was said, indeed, that it amounted to more than double the value of what the persecuting plunderers had carried off.

¹ "Drych yr Amseroedd," p. 32.

This, together with the untimely and awful end of divers of his most bitter persecutors, had such a terrifying effect upon the inhabitants, as secured him from being ever afterwards so barbarously treated. The said field is known there, and shown to strangers to this day. It is about three miles west of Newtown, near the Cambrian railway, and is known as Cae'r fendith, *i.e.*, *The field of the blessing*.

"It was not uncommon, in that persecuting age, for such as had been very forward and cruel in oppressing and persecuting others, to be themselves overtaken by some dreadful disaster, which had very much the appearance of a Divine visitation or judgment. This is said to have been remarkably the case with several of those who had been most forward, or principally concerned, in oppressing this good man and his family. Two of these were justices of the peace. One of them died suddenly, while he was eating his dinner. The other, as he was returning home drunk from Newtown, fell into the Severn, and was drowned. Another—it was, I think, the High Sheriff, or his deputy—who had been active in seizing and taking away the cattle and goods of our pious sufferer, fell off his horse, some time after, within sight of the injured man's house, and broke his neck."¹

Mr. Henry Gregory, pastor of the Antipædobaptist church at Cwm, in Radnorshire, and one of the excellent of the earth, "was very cruelly harassed and tormented by the unfeeling and barbarous persecutors. It is not likely that he did escape imprisonment; of that, however, I am not able at present to give any account; but in the spoiling of his goods he was certainly a very great and frequent sufferer. One time the persecutors took away all his cattle, except one cow, which they left out of a kind of mock or feigned humanity, *to furnish milk for the children*. Not long after, when the good man was from home, they came and took away that cow also. It had been said long before that *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel*. This pious family found that saying grievously verified. The cow had probably been left the first time in order to have an opportunity to give a keener edge to the distress of the

¹ Richards's "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial," pp. 221-2.

sufferers, by taking her away afterwards unexpectedly; and so the case may be considered as a sort of refinement upon the more common or vulgar form of inhumanity and cruelty. The husband, on his return home, found his poor wife overwhelmed with grief and vexation, bewailing the loss of her last, her only remaining cow; on which he mildly said to her, 'Do not vex thyself, my dear; Providence, I doubt not, will again, by some means, procure us another cow.'

"His persecuting enemies had little reason to congratulate themselves on the part they had acted against him. God, from heaven, seemed to frown upon their proceedings, and mark them out as objects of His displeasure. Of two men, who were seen eagerly and impetuously driving away his cattle over the ford in a river close by his house, one was drowned some time after in that very ford; and the other is said to have died miserably, eaten up by worms I think, like Herod. Another of his persecutors, on his death bed, kept crying out that nothing troubled him so much as his having been concerned in taking away the cattle and possessions of Henry Gregory. A certain rich and powerful neighbour of his, though very full of enmity, yet cautiously refrained from abetting, or being any way concerned in the measures then carried on against him and his brethren; and when asked why he declined countenancing those proceedings, lifted up his hands, and answered, 'God forbid that I should meddle with these people. Do you not observe what evils are ever befalling their persecutors?'"¹

Mr. Stephen Hughes, a most moderate and inoffensive Nonconformist, and decidedly the greatest benefactor of his country in that age, while prosecuting his work of faith and labour of love, his seraphic piety and unexampled benevolence "exposed him to the censure of the conservators of the sacred keys, to whom it was equal whether they made their markets by the sins or by the piety of the people. These gentlemen passed the censures of the Church upon him, and, not long after, delivered him to the secular power, which confined him to a close prison in Caermarthen, to the prejudice of his health

¹ Richards' "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial," pp. 238-40.

and hazard of his life. But it pleased God, by a favourable and unexpected providence, to effect his enlargement, by which means he recovered his health and opportunities for further service.”¹

Mr. William Jones, the eminent founder of the Antipædo-baptist interest in the western counties of South Wales, was kept a close prisoner at Caermarthen for four years, for no other crime than preaching the gospel.²

Mr. Peregrine Phillips, of Pembrokeshire, a man eminent for his learning, piety, and unwearied labours in the service of Christ, was treated with great severity. “He was prosecuted on the Five Mile Act, and a number of his cattle were taken away by order of Mr. Howard, the High Sheriff, who, some time afterward, when he lay upon his death bed, asked him forgiveness, which was readily granted; but his cattle were never restored. He was again taken up some time after, and made close prisoner in the middle of harvest, none being left to manage his farm but a wife, with five small children, and a very few servants. When he had been two months confined he fell sick, and was discharged by the Commissioners, probably through the influence of his kind landlord, Sir Herbert Perrot, who sent his coach to carry him home to his own habitation, where he lay a long time ill of a fever, and was given over by his physicians; but a day of fasting and prayer being set apart by many serious Christians in those parts on his account, God was pleased wonderfully to restore and raise him. He was cast to prison a second time for keeping a conventicle in his house; and the judges, with Bishop Thomas, coming then to the assizes at Haverfordwest, made him considerable offers if he would conform; but not prevailing, they set him at liberty. However, he was still troubled with fines and outlawries; his house was searched by the deputy-lieutenants, bailiffs, constables, &c.; for he would not desist from preaching in his house, and labouring among his people by night; nay, he preached to a number of people that would come to him even when he was in prison.”³

¹ Calamy, vol. ii. p. 719.

² Palmer, vol. iii. p. 497.

³ Calamy, vol. iv. pp. 842-3.

Mr. Samuel Jones, A.M., of Brynllwarch, Glamorganshire, a most excellent minister, a very moderate though firm Nonconformist, and one of the most accomplished scholars and successful tutors in the kingdom, was frequently imprisoned for his Nonconformity during the time Dr. Francis Davies was Bishop of Llandaff (1667-75). One day in the harvest time, as he was sitting under a tree near his house, two men came up to him and asked if that place was Brynllwarch? to whom he returned an affirmative answer. They then inquired if Mr. Jones was at home? "Yes," said he; "go in, and you shall soon see him." He suspected that they were constables coming to arrest him, but he did not attempt to escape, which he could have done easily. He soon followed them to the house, and said—"I am Mr. Jones. What is your business with me? His dignified and commanding appearance so affected the men, that for a while they could not utter a word. At length one of them tremblingly said that they had a warrant to take him before Justice —, of Ewenny, an officious, persecuting magistrate. Though the distance from Brynllwarch to Ewenny is above ten miles, Mr. Jones chose to walk it rather than inconvenience a neighbour, to whom he had lent his horses that day to carry his hay. Being somewhat corpulent, and in a delicate state of health, he felt very tired after walking such a distance. When he reached the place he was led to the kitchen, where he took a seat. Some time after, the magistrate coming in suddenly, and finding him seated, asked him angrily how he dared to sit in his house? "Sir," replied Mr. Jones, standing, "I did not think that it would have been an offence to a gentleman that a tired man, sent for by him, should sit in his kitchen; but," he added, "these tired limbs of mine will support me when some shall not be able to stand." "Do you know," said the angry magistrate, "to whom you speak?" "I do," replied Mr. J. "I have," said the persecutor, "authority to commit you to prison." "Not," replied the good man, "without my Heavenly Father's permission." At this the enraged magistrate wrote a commitment, and sent him in the custody of two constables to the House of Correction at

Cowbridge ; but before he was above a mile on his way there, the persecutor's conscience began to trouble him for what he had done, and in order to quiet it he sent a messenger after Mr. Jones to release him. He then returned home, after walking that day above twenty miles.¹

Mr. James Owen, afterwards of Shrewsbury, when he began to exercise his gifts as a preacher about Swansea, in Glamorgan-shire, was soon interrupted by the Spiritual Courts. Having been constrained to leave South Wales, he removed to Bodwell, in Caernarvonshire, where a gospel ministry was greatly needed ; but he had not been long there before he felt the rigour of those penalties with which he had been threatened in the south. Having remained in that country as a prisoner for about nine months, he was conveyed by night to Bronyclydwr, in Merionethshire, the residence of the pious Hugh Owen. He was again driven from that country by the violence of persecution. In November, 1676, he settled at Swiney, near Oswestry. "He now redoubled his diligence to propagate Christian knowledge in the dark parts of his native country, and took frequent journeys for that purpose, but was soon opposed with greater fury than ever. In one of his journeys, as he was going from Chester to preach at Treythyn, in Flintshire, being a stranger in those parts, he inquired the way at a place which happened to be a public-house, and where there was a company of gentlemen then drinking. One of them, a bitter enemy to Dissenters, overhearing what passed, asked him to whom he would be directed there. When he innocently told him, the gentleman said he knew the person well, and was his very good friend, and, with an obliging air, put him on the road. Though the traveller was upon the reserve, yet his artful guide suspected him to be a Dissenting minister. However, they parted in a friendly manner. Mr. Owen went forward, and was to preach next day at one Mr. Fenner's, in Hope parish. The gentleman, fond of this mighty discovery, returned to his associates, and with them contrived how to surprise the preacher and people ; for they presumed there would be a conventicle next day somewhere in that neighbourhood. It

¹ "Trysorfa Grefyddol Gwent a Morganwg" for 1838, p. 2.

was agreed to meet again the following day upon an adjacent high hill, where, under the pretence of hawking or some other diversion, they might easily observe which way the poor, innocent, and unwary people gathered. The stratagem took; and when they descried the place they soon dismounted, and surrounded it in an hostile manner, with guns and swords. To make sure of their prey, they secured the avenues leading to the house, placed sentinels at the doors to prevent the escape of any from within, while part of the company broke into the house, and profanely disturbed the assembly in the midst of divine service. They took care to seize upon Mr. Owen, and also upon his Bible, which one of them, finding a concordance bound up at the end of it, swore was an unlawful Bible, and he should suffer for it! His notes were then inspected, which, happening to be in Latin, a language which they did not it seems understand, they swore again that he was a Jesuit, and they would prove it. After they had hectorcd a while, and terrified the people with threats of ruin, backed by horrid imprecations, they sent for a constable, who made them wait for about three hours. In the interim they had time to cool a little, and began to examine Mr. Owen, who till now held his peace. They inquired about his learning, and why he would not conform; adding a great many ensnaring questions about the King and Government; but not being able, with all their artifice, to trepan him, or draw from any of the auditors anything that would criminate him, they gave over. Mr. Owen managed the discourse with so much discretion, presence of mind, and force of reasoning, as at once confounded his opponents, and confirmed his friends in their Dissenting principles. When the dilatory constable arrived one of them took out a paper, and made the ignorant officer believe it to be a warrant, by virtue of which he and they now drove Mr. Owen and his hearers like so many sheep before them to Mold, a town about five miles off. When they came there, one of the prosecuting zealots sent for Mr. C — J —, a Justice of the Peace for that county, who treated Mr. Owen and his fellow-prisoners in a very scurrilous manner; but not knowing what to make of his Latin notes, demanded help from the vicar, who told him that

they were notes of a sermon on Canticles v. 16, '*He is altogether lovely.*' After some discourse had passed between Mr. Owen and the clergyman, both he and the Justice, in spite of their bigotry and prejudice, confessed that he was a learned young man, and could not conceal their concern that such a person should be a Dissenter. Yet, after a long debate and hard usage, both Mr. Owen and the person in whose house he preached were committed prisoners to Caerwys gaol, and the rest of the company were bound over to the Quarter Sessions. While in prison he met with much civility from the honest gaoler, and from several worthy clergymen who came to see and discourse with him on this occasion, but was *otherwise* treated by some of the visitants. His very adversaries, however, were convinced of his great abilities, and scrupled not to speak honourably of them. He continued in this prison about three weeks, during which time he usually spent four or five hours every day in praying, preaching, and expounding the Scriptures to his fellow-prisoners, and such of the inhabitants of the town as came in. This, it seems, alarmed the neighbouring gentry, lest the prison should be converted into a conventicle, and the town and country be infected with the contagion of fanaticism. Information was speedily brought to Mr. Justice T—— against the gaoler and his prisoner. He took up the matter in earnest, and sent strict orders to keep the prison doors locked, and suffer no person whatever to come in to hear sermons, or join with the prisoners in acts of divine worship. The poor gaoler was obliged to obey. The people, however, were not terrified by these measures; they still to the last kept crowding about the window at the usual times to hear him preach.

“When they despaired of obtaining their liberty, or having justice done them, Mr. John Evans, of Wrexham (the father of the author of '*Sermons on the Christian Temper*'), sent Mr. Owen's case to an able and eminent lawyer, who gave his opinion that his imprisonment was false and illegal, and that the magistrate who committed him was punishable. This matter being brought before the justices at the Quarter Sessions, they cleared themselves from having any hand in those arbitrary proceedings against the prisoners, so that the odium justly

devolved upon Mr. Justice T——, by whom they had been sent to prison. This gentleman (like the Philippian magistrates, Acts xvi.) became sensible now of his danger, and, ready to recant, gave immediate orders to the gaoler without any further formalities to discharge the prisoners. Mr. Owen was advised to prosecute the unrighteous magistrate, and assured he might recover damages; but he declined it, choosing rather to leave his cause with God, the righteous and supreme Judge. When the tyrannical Justice found Mr. Owen to be a man of peace, and that he could not be persuaded to follow the law against him, he very ungratefully and basely, after the Sessions were over, fined Mr. Owen, together with the host and hearers, whose houses were soon after rifled, and their goods seized upon and sold. Our pious sufferer bore these hardships and indignities with exemplary firmness and patience. Writing from the prison to some of his relations, he observed—‘That if the gospel was not worth suffering for, it was not worth preaching. It is, indeed, an honour,’ said he, ‘after we have preached the truth, to be called forth to suffer for it.’ Shortly after he wrote thus: ‘Religion is not calculated for worldly advantages; it brings everlasting gain, but very often temporal losses. How uncertain are worldly things! Job, in the morning, was the greatest of all the men of the East, and before night poor to a proverb.’ ‘We are,’ said he another time, ‘travelling for eternity; and travellers must not expect fair ways and weather always. Afflictions are appointed means of salvation; and salvation should reconcile us to everything that has a tendency to promote it.’¹

Mr. James James, one of the pastors of the Antipædobaptist church at Rhydwillim and its branches, on a day of public humiliation attended a prayer-meeting at Llandyssil, in Cardiganshire, where he delivered a short opening address. In consequence of that, an informer preferred against him the charge of preaching in a conventicle. Mr. James and the owner of the house where the meeting was held were fined to the amount of forty pounds. The latter, not having the money to pay the fine, had his cattle taken away. He afterwards bor-

¹ “The Life of James Owen.”

rowed the sum, and had them restored to him. The injured man then proceeded against the informer for taking his money illegally. The case was tried at the Quarter Sessions at Lampeter, and turned in favour of the persecuted party. The informer's solicitor, when he saw the case turning against his client, struck the table in great rage, and said, holding out his arm—"As long as this arm hangs to my body I will be against that sect!" Before he had scarcely finished speaking he felt some pain in that arm, which increased day after day, until it had actually putrified, and fell off. The wretched creature soon after died in great agony.¹

The Nonconformists at Abergavenny and the surrounding districts were for a long time greatly harassed and plundered by one Justice Baker, of that place; but at length he filled up the measure of his iniquity. Going beyond the law, cruel as it was, he was proceeded against, became a bankrupt, and was reduced to miserable poverty."²

In addition to the account already given of the sufferings of the good people called Quakers, the following startling facts should not be omitted:—

"Besides the grievous persecution inflicted on this people in Wales under colour of law, many of them were grievously beaten and abused, to the hazard of their lives, by wicked persons on the road, who on presumption of impunity made it their sport to insult and abuse their peaceable neighbours. Of those who suffered much by this means were John Humphreys, and Humphrey Williams, at Caermarthen; James Lewis, near Tenby; Griffith Morgan, and many others; and even some of the priests struck several of them with their own hands.

"In this year also (1688) many of this people suffered very grievous and exorbitant distresses for their religious meetings, of which we have the following instances, viz.:

"1. Thomas Simmonds, of Pincheston, in Pembrokeshire, for suffering meetings at his house, had his cattle taken away at one time, worth £24, which were sold for £8. At another time, some household goods of his, worth 26s., were sold for 7s.;

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 367.

² Jones's "History of the Parish of Aberystwith," p. 96.

and at a third time, corn, hay, and thatch, taken from him, to the value of £20, were sold for £5, of which one-third was ordered at the sessions to be given to the poor; but they, conscious of the sufferer's innocence, from whose charity they had often found relief, refused to receive any of that money when tendered them.

"2. William Thomas, of Llandewi, being fined 5s., was met on the highway by the chief constable, a petty constable, and an informer, who demanded the horse he rode on; he, asking for their warrant, was answered with—'Sirrah, do you question the King's power?' and at the same time was struck on the head and shoulders with a great staff, and plucked from his horse; the constables looking on, but not daring to gainsay the act of their master, the informer. The horse was taken away for the 5s. fine, and afterwards sold for £3 1s. 4d. Besides which they took from him a pan worth £1 1s.

"3. Lewis David, for £20 fine, had his corn and hay seized, to the value of £25, and sold for £8, being all the effects he had in the county of Pembroke; but he having a house and land in Caermarthenshire, the justices sent a certificate thither, by which his cattle, corn, hay, and bedding there were seized, to the value of £36 more, which they also sold for £8. So that, having taken the value of £61 for a fine of £20, they yet pretended to want £4 of their first demand.

"4. Cadwalader Thomas, near Bala, in Merionethshire, for meetings held at his house, had cattle taken away worth £55. He was also turned out of a farm by his landlord for no other cause than his being a Quaker, and suffering meetings at his house, whereby he sustained much loss.

"5. Elizabeth Willey, for a fine of 15s., had her oxen taken away, to the value of £15.

"Anno 1674. On the 7th of the month called March, toward the close of this year,¹ David Maurice, of Penybont, in Denbighshire, being in the commission of the peace for the county of Montgomery, came with fourteen or fifteen persons, most of them armed, to a house called Cloddiau Cochion, within the corporation of Welshpool, where a small number of Friends

¹ The year then ended on the 25th of March.

were met together in silence. He required them to depart, but one of them, Thomas Lloyd, desiring him to stay a little, he and his company sat down, and the said Thomas Lloyd spoke to them concerning the nature of true religion and worship, whereupon the said Justice fined him £20 for preaching, and several others for being at the said meeting. Shortly after he issued warrants for distress, some of which were executed by his clerk, and others by his servants, and by virtue thereof were taken from Thomas Lloyd four cows and a mare, worth about £16; and from Thomas Lewis, at whose house the meeting was, six cows, two oxen, and two heifers. The said Justice's clerk also took, without warrant, from Charles Lloyd and Thomas Lewis, each of them, a horse. Also the officers of the parish of Meifod took from Charles Lloyd, of Dolobran, by warrant from the said David Maurice, ten young beasts, for being at the said meeting; David Jones, of Bronyarth, for being a hearer at the said meeting, had a brass pan, for his own proper fines, taken from him, and three cows and an ox to pay the fines of others, who were supposed to be too poor to pay for themselves.¹

"Anno 1677, on the 18th of the month called July, two priests, viz., Hugh Wilson, priest of Trefeglwys, and Isaac Lloyd, priest of Llanidloes, gave information of a meeting at the house of John Jarman, at Llanidloes, in Montgomeryshire; upon which the Mayor, with constables, came thither, and committed seven of the assembly to prison, and fined others, who had their cattle seized for their fines, viz. :—

John Potts, one cow and six young beasts,	£.	s.	d.
worth	12	10	0
Griffith Jarman, five young beasts worth	7	10	0
John Roberts, a cow, worth	3	0	0
John Jarman, a cow, worth	2	10	0
David Owen, a horse, worth	2	0	0
	27	10	0

¹ The above-mentioned David Maurice was a bitter persecutor of all other Nonconformists as well as Quakers. He monopolized the offices of magistrate and informer, but his wicked career soon came to an awful end. He was thrown off his horse in a brook near his own house, and was carried by the stream to the river Tannant, where he miserably perished. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness."—*Life of Richard Davies*, pp. 86–88.

"Anno 1683. In Cardiganshire, William Lloyd, Evan David and John Rhydderch, were committed to Tregaron gaol, on processes for absence from the national worship, and were kept close prisoners there for twelve weeks. For the same cause also, William Lloyd and Evan William were imprisoned seven days at Llanbadarn.

"Anno 1684. Humphrey Williams was prisoner in Caermarthen gaol about a year, for absence from the national worship; and Thomas Griffiths about three months for the same cause." ¹

In the work from which the foregoing extract is taken, we have the names of nearly four hundred Friends in Wales who suffered more or less for their Nonconformity, from the year 1660 to 1688. It should be borne in mind that the Society of Friends was but a mere handful in comparison to the other Nonconforming bodies. If they had kept a record of their sufferings with as much care and minuteness as the Friends did, large volumes might have been filled with the most remarkable instances of injustice, tyranny, and barbarous cruelty on the one hand, and of patient suffering, undaunted courage, and unswerving fidelity to principle on the other.

In almost every neighbourhood throughout the Principality, except Anglesea, there are traditions of the sufferings of the old Nonconformists; and secluded spots, groves, and caves, where they used to meet for worship in the night, are still pointed out. Most of these traditions have undoubtedly some truth for their foundation; but, at this distance of time, they hardly deserve a place in a work which professes to be a faithful record of authentic facts.

When the Conventicle Act was revived in the year 1669, returns were made—in obedience to an order from the Archbishop of Canterbury dated June 8, 1669, addressed to the Bishop of London, and through him to all the bishops and clergy ²—of the conventicles in every diocese in England and Wales. These returns are still preserved amongst the MSS. at Lambeth Palace. Having been collected by the avowed

¹ Besse's "Sufferings of the Quakers," vol. i. p. 748-60.

² Add. MSS. Brit. Museum, No. 19,399, f. 107.

enemies of the Nonconformists, they are not to be received as perfectly fair and correct, especially as to the number of attendants, which, we may feel assured, are not over-estimated;¹ for the meetings were kept as privately as possible, and therefore the clergy and the churchwardens, who collected the statistics, could not have known the exact number of attendants; and in some parishes, also, the clergyman and the churchwardens were moderate men, and not of a persecuting spirit; they consequently made their returns as vague and indefinite as they possibly could, in order not to expose their harmless neighbours. But, imperfect as they necessarily are, these returns are highly important, as they furnish us with some idea of the numbers and social position of the Nonconformists at that time. Unfortunately the returns from the dioceses of St. David's and Bangor are not to be found at Lambeth Palace; we have therefore only those from Llandaff and St. Asaph to give. They are as follows:—

“DIOCESE OF LLANDAFF.

“COUNTY OF MONMOUTH.

“*Pantteg*.—At the house of Richard Hanbury. Number, 40, 50, 60, and sometimes more. Teachers, George White, of Llanvihangel, and sometimes the said Richard Hanbury.

“*Llanwenarth*.—Anabaptists. Number, 80 to 100. Teachers, David Robert and Morgan Evan.

“*Llanwern*.—Quakers. Number, 30 or 40; and when they hear of some eminent seducing teacher, there will be 60 and upwards.

“*Abergavenny*.—Anabaptists. Number, 60. Their teachers and seducers are Christopher Price, an apothecary; John Edward, shoemaker; and Watkin Morgan, shoemaker.

“*Caerleon*.—At the house of Mr. Henry Walter. *Magor*.—At the house of Mr. Samuel Jones, of Little Salisbury, and Mr. Thomas Jones, of Milton. *Llanvaches*.—At the house of

¹ The Archbishop in his letter requests the collectors of the returns to ascertain whether the same persons attended different conventicles, so that they might not over-estimate the number. It was evidently his wish to prove that they were few in number and low socially.

Mr. Nathan Rogers. *Dinham*.—At the house of William Blethin. *Caldicot*.—At the house of Hopkin Rogers. *Wilwick*.—At the house of John Jones. *Shirenewton*.—At the house of Robert Jones.

“These meetings are of three sects—viz., Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers. The number is sometimes 200, or more at the greatest. Of which number there are many persons of good quality, being country gentlemen, and such as either were in actual arms in the late rebellion, or bred up under such, and many of the meaner sort of people, besides women and children. Teachers, Mr. Henry Walter, of Parkypill, in the parish of Caerleon; Thomas Barnes, late of Magor, now of Bristol; one Lloyd, who pretends to be a scholar of New Inn Hall, Oxon; and one William Milman, of Magor, a sabbatarian Anabaptist; besides Repeaters—viz., Samuel Jones, gent., Henry Rumsey, gent., Robert Jones, gent., Hopkin Rogers, George Edwards, Watkin George; with divers other vagrant persons, leaders and teachers of the Quakers.

“*Marshfield*.—At the house of Jane Reynolds, the relict of Henry William, a lieutenant in the late rebellion. Number, 100. Teachers, Thomas Quarrell, John Powell, and others. The congregation is made up of old militiamen, of the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan.

“*Bedwas*.—Every third sabbath day, at the houses of William Evan and Thomas Morgan. Number, 150. Teachers, Morgan Lewis Lawrence, of Bedwas, and Thomas Quarrell, of Whitchurch.

“*Mynyddislwyn and Bedwellty*.—There are five conventicles in these two parishes; at the houses of Evan Lewis, Philip Rees, Evan William, Watkin John Evan, of Mynyddislwyn, and Edmund Morgan, of Bedwellty. Number, 200. Teachers, Evan William, Watkin John Evan, Thomas Quarrell, and William Lewis, of Gellygaer.

“*Newport*.—At the house of Mr. Rice Williams. Number, 100, of all sorts, some gentlemen. Teachers, Mr. Rice Williams, one Prosser, of the parish of Tredunock; Mr. Joshua Lloyd, Mr. Rogers, and Watkin John, of Mynyddislwyn.

“*Llantrissant*.—At the house of George Morgan. Number, 40 or 50. Teacher, William Thomas, of the said parish, son-in-law of the said Morgan, their entertainer.

“*Llangwm*.—At the houses of John Gwynne, John Morgan, Nathaniel Morgan, Thomas William, and David Evan. Number, sometimes 200, 100, 60, 30.—Some men of competent parts and breeding; and have been, in the time of the late rebellion, in offices, both military and civil. Some of £500 a year, some £300, some £200, some £100, some £60, and some £30; besides people of mean sort. Teachers, William Thomas, of Llantrissant, one Millman, and one Jones, a Repeater.

“*In the Priory of Usk*.—At the house of Mrs. Mary Jones, the relict of William Jones, Esq. Number, 30 or 40. Teachers, Moore, Goddard, and William Thomas, of Llantrissant.

“*Llangibby and Llandegveth*.—Edward Walters, of Llangibby, Walter William, of Llandegveth, and Giles Morgan, of Llandewivach, entertain them. Number, 30 or 40; some freeholders and farmers amongst them. Teachers, William Thomas, Walter Prosser, and Walter William.

“GLAMORGANSHIRE.

“*Merthyr Tydvil*.—At the houses of Howell Rees Philip and Isaac John Morgan; and, for the mixed rabble and the Quakers, at the houses of Jenkin Thomas, Harry Thomas, and Lewis Beck. Number, 300, 400, 500, and sometimes 600. Teacher, Captain Harry William Thomas, that knows only the Welsh tongue, and hath been, during all the late rebellion, a captain against the King.

“*Llanedern*.—Every other sabbath. Entertained by Llewelyn John. Number about 40, of mean quality. Teachers, Thomas Quarrell and John Powell.

“*Egltreysilan*.—The entertainers are Watkin John Thomas, Jenkin Thomas, and William Rees, a mason. Teachers, Thomas Quarrell and John Powell.

“*Baglan*.—Entertained by Robert Thomas. Catabaptists, Anabaptists, and Independents. Number about 20. Teacher, Robert Thomas.

"Bettws.—At the house of Rees Powell, in the late time of rebellion, a sheriff of the county and a justice of the peace. Teacher, Mr. Samuel Jones, A.M., ordained by presbyters.

"Newton Nottage.—At the house of Richard Cradock. Number, 20 or 30. Teachers, Richard Cradock and Lewis Thomas.

"DIOCESE OF ST. ASAPH.

"MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

"Llanllwchhaiarn.—Henry Williams is a great conventicle holder.

"Llandyssil.—David Phillips, a tailor, and Margaret Evans, are conventicle holders. Number, about 40. The principals are Thomas Fudge, Lewis Turner, Raynold Wilson, a schoolmaster, all of Aberhavesp parish; Edward Price, of Bettws, a Captain in the late rebellion, and Richard Baxter, of Tregynon parish. Teachers, Henry Williams, and David Phillips, a tailor.

"Meifod.—At the house of Charles Lloyd, gent., a Quaker; and the other conventicle at the house of David Williams, gent. Independents. Number, 50, 60, and sometimes 100. They meet sometimes by day and sometimes by night. The chiefs of the Quakers are Thomas Lloyd, William Evans, of the said parish; and Cadwalader Edwards. The Independent conventicle is abetted by William Beddoe, Edward Meredith, Humphrey Meredith, Samuel Meredith, and Thomas Meredith, of the said parish.

"Guilsfield.—At the house of William Lewis, a Quaker.

"Llanvyllin.—The conventicles here are held at the houses of John Griffith, gent., Walter Griffith, gent., and other places. Teachers, Vavasor Powell, John Evans, and one Morris, a cooper.

Llanvechan.—There are two conventicles held in this parish; one in the house of Arthur Chidlow, the other in the house of Richard Troglus (Trollus?). Number, 50 or 60. Teachers, John Evans, late schoolmaster, Oswestry; Morris Williams, a cooper; and Richard Baxter, servant to Mr. John Kynaston.

“SHROPSHIRE.

“*Oswestry*.—The conventicles are held at several houses and places successively. Number, about 30 persons of the town, and some strangers from other parts. Teachers, Rowland Nevett, late Vicar of Oswestry, and Mr. John Evans, late schoolmaster there. These build their impunity on the example of London and other places in the kingdom.

“DENBIGHSHIRE.

“*Wrexham*.—In this parish are schismatics many, but all or most of them of ordinary condition.”^{*}

There were several “conventicles” in these two dioceses, of which authentic accounts are preserved, besides those mentioned in the foregoing list, such as those in the parishes of Aberystuth, Monmouthshire; Gellygaer, Llanvabon, and Glyncoiwg, in Glamorganshire; Llanbrynmair, in Montgomeryshire; one at or near the town of Denbigh, and one in Flintshire. In the diocese of Bangor there were three or four respectable Independent churches, and a considerable number of Quakers, especially in Merionethshire. The Nonconformists in the extensive diocese of St. David’s were very numerous. They were scattered over the counties of Radnor, Brecknock, Caermarthen, the western district of Glamorgan, and some parts of Pembroke and Cardigan. In some parishes they formed the majority of the population. Jones, in his “History of Breconshire” (vol. i. pp. 333-4), says that their number, in thirty-six parishes of that county, in 1673, amounted to 682. That number evidently does not include women and children, and a host of “secret disciples.” It is almost certain that the number of professed Nonconformists in the Principality at this time could not have been under fifteen or sixteen thousand.

The indulgences granted to the Nonconformists by Charles II. in 1672, and James II. in 1687, were hailed with overwhelming joy by the generality of those bitterly persecuted people in Wales, and other remote parts of the kingdom; but in London and the large towns, where the sufferings of Non-

^{*} Lambeth MSS. vol. 639.

conformists were somewhat less severe, and the sinister designs of the monarchs better understood, those unconstitutional stretches of the Royal power were looked upon with coldness and distrust. During those seasons of partial and precarious liberty, the persecuted Welsh ministers came out of their hiding-places, and traversed the length and breadth of the land, preaching to crowded congregations hungering for the bread of life.¹ Mr. Joshua Thomas has preserved, in his *History of the Baptists*, a poem composed in 1687 by one Richard Pugh, a Breconshire Nonconformist, on the announcement of liberty to the Nonconformists by King James. As a poetical composition, it has no merit whatever; but its description of the sufferings and hardships which multitudes of innocent people had passed through in the preceding years, and their joy in the prospect of deliverance, is indescribably affecting.

The indulgence granted by Charles is dated March 24th, 1672. The following is a list of the houses recorded, and the licenses taken under it in Wales. The letter A stands for Anabaptists, I for Independents, C for Congregationalists, and P for Presbyterians.

GLAMORGANSHIRE.

Place.	Preacher.	Sect.	House.
Swansea	Marmaduke Mathews	I.	His own house.
"	Daniel Higgs	C.	"
"	Stephen Hughes	I.	"
"	Lewis Thomas	A.	William Dykes.
Bishopston	"	C.	Henry Griffith.
Nicholston	"	C.	Robert Gethin.
Rosily	"	C.	Richard Devun.
Llangynwyd	Samuel Jones	P.	Own house.
Goetreheh	"	P.	Rees Powell.
Cardiff	John French	P.	Own house.
Wenvoe	Joshua Miller	P.	Morgan Thomas.
Bridgend	Thomas Joseph	A.	Own house.
Newton Nottage	Howell Thomas	A.	W. Andrews.

¹ Henry Maurice's MS. Diary for 1672.

Place.	Preacher.	Sect.	House.
Newton Nottage	Watkin Cradock	I.	Own house.
St. Bride's	"	A.	Widow Williams.
Baglan	Robert Thomas	I.	Own house.
Kenffyg	"	I.	Lewis Alward.
Gellygaer	"	I.	Lewis Rees.
Llanvalon	"	I.	W. Rowlands.
Egwysilan	Thomas John	I.	William John.
Cowbridge	Samuel Jones	P.	Eve Christopher.
Neath	"	P.	Elizb. Morgan.
Kildendy	"	P.	Rice Powell.
Merthyr	Henry Williams	I.	Howell Rees.

CAEMARTHENSHIRE.

Llanstephan	Stephen Hughes	I.	Evan Morris.
Pencadair	"	I.	Widow Jenkins.
Llannon	Robert Morgan	A.	John Morgan.
Llangennech	"	A.	Edward Williams.
"	"	A.	Joshua Franklyn.
Kennarth	James Davies	C.	John James.
Pencarreg	David Jones	C.	No house named.

PEMBROKESHIRE.

Haverfordwest	Peregrine Phillips	C.	Own house.
"	"	C.	Richard Meyler.
Killgerran	Jenkin Jones	C.	Own house.

CARDIGANSHIRE.

Cardigan	James Davies	C.	Own house.
"	"	C.	Widow Gwynne.
Llanbadarnodyn	Morgan Howell	C.	John Jones.
Llandisilio	"	C.	David Thomas.
Llanfair Trefhelygen	"	C.	David Rees.
Dihewyd	"	C.	Philip Davies.
Llanddawibrefi	David Jones	C.	Own house.
Cellan	Evan Hughes	C.	David Hughes.
Llanbadarn	"	C.	Evan David.

RADNORSHIRE.

Place.	Preacher.	Sect.	House.
Llandrindod	William Green	A.	Own house.
Begildy	Richard Griffiths	P.	Own house.
"	"	P.	Owen Morgan.
"	Maurice Griffith	C.	Own house.
Glascombe	Edward Owen	C.	Richard Mills.
Llanbister	John Hanmer	C.	Anne King.
Llangunllo	"	C.	Richard Griffith.

BRECONSHIRE.

Talgarth	David Williams	C.	William Watkins.
Llanigon	"	C.	William Watkins.
Llanavan	Thomas Evans	P.	No house named.
Llanvigan	Lewis Prytherch	C.	David Williams.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

Newport		I.	Barbara Williams.
Mynyddislwyn	Watkin Jones	I.	Own house.
"	"	I.	Thomas James.
"	"	I.	Evan Williams.
Caldicot	"	C.	James Lewis.
Llantrissant	George Robinson	C.	George Morgan.
"	William Thomas	A.	"
Llangwm	William Millman	A.	William Richards.
Llangybi	Walter Williams	C.	Edward Waters.
Marshfield	"	I.	Jane Reynolds.
Aberystroth	"	I.	Llewellyn Rosser.
"	"	I.	John James.
Magor	Thomas Barnes	I.	Walter Jones.
Bettws	Reynald Morgan	P.	Own house.
Llanwenarth	"	I.	John Watkins.
Henllys	"	I.	Margaret Jones.
Abergavenny	John Edwards	A.	Own house.
"	Christopher Price	A.	Own house.
Bedwellty	Thomas Jones	A.	Own house.
Llantillopertholeu	William Prichard	A.	Own house.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

Place.	Preacher.	Sect.	House.
Bryng	William Prichard	C.	John Kynaston.
Welshpool	Hugh Rogers	P.	David Rogers.
"	"	P.	Widow Morris.
Groynby	Richard Price	C.	Own house.

DENBIGHSHIRE.

Christionwydd } (Near Ruabon) }	Richard Price	C.	William Winne.
Near Oswestry	"	C.	Hugh Edwards
Glyn	"	C.	John Hughes.
Ruthin	"	C.	John Roberts.
Wrexham	John Evans	C.	Edward Kenrick.
"	"	P.	John Hughes.
Ruabon	Philip Rogers	C.	Roger Kynaston.
Llanfair	Jonathan Roberts	C.	Own house.

FLINTSHIRE.

Malpas	Philip Henry	P.	Own house.
Hanmer	"	P.	James Jackson.
"	"	P.	Catharine Key.
"	"	P.	William Bennett.
Bryne	"	P.	Luke Lloyd.

CAERNARVONSHIRE.

Caernarvon	Ellis Rowlands	P.	Own house.
Tynycoed	John Williams	C.	Own house.
Bodwell House	"	I.	No name.
Tynycæau	John Rowland	I.	Own house.
Pwllheli	William Rowlands	I.	Own house.
Llangybi	Ellis Williams	P.	Own house.

MERIONETHSHIRE.

Cynfal	Ellis Williams	C.	Mary Lloyd.
Peniarth	"	C.	David Williams.

Place.	Preacher.	Sect.	House.
Erwgogel	Ellis Williams	C.	John Owen.
Bodwynog	„	C.	Ellis Davies.
Llanegryn	Hugh Owen	C.	Own house. ¹

A considerable number of houses where religious meetings were regularly held, and the names of preachers who were constantly preaching at this time, are not to be found in the foregoing list. It is possible that persecution ceased for a time when the persecutors saw that the king favoured the Nonconformists, and consequently they delayed applying for licenses while their meetings were not disturbed; and probably some in Wales, as well as in England, suspected the Declaration of Indulgence as intended to open the way for the re-establishment of popery, and they preferred to suffer any personal inconvenience rather than be the occasion of any advantage to the dreaded Roman Catholics. Owing to the determined opposition of a majority in Parliament, the Declaration of Indulgence was cancelled in the spring of 1673, and soon after persecution was revived as fierce as ever.

In the year 1675 Mr. Henry Maurice, pastor of the Nonconformist church in Breconshire, sent to Mr. Edward Terril, of Bristol, “a catalogue of all the congregated churches in the general counties of Wales, together with the names of their pastors and other church officers.” This most important document is here inserted *verbatim*, as published with the “Broadmead Records,” with only a few orthographical corrections, and some explanatory remarks:—

“ANGLESEA.—There hath not been any church in this county of the constitution aforesaid, nor any number of people professing religion, in the power and strictness of it, joining with any church elsewhere, in all these late times.

“BRECKNOCKSHIRE.—The only church in this county is that which commonly meets in Llanigon, of which Henry Maurice is pastor elect; Charles Lloyd, Thomas Gwyn, David Williams, Henry Williams, Richard Jones, William Howell, ordained elders; Lewis Prytherch (or Protheroe) elder elect. There are

¹ Copied from the License Book in the Record Office.

also four deacons. The church consisting mostly of Independents in judgment, and partly of Baptists ; their communion being founded upon union unto Christ, as far as may be, according to the rule of gospel love. There are two rather small parties of more rigid Baptists in this county. The one of them is joined with those of Llanddewi, in Radnorshire. *Vide* Monmouth and Radnorshire."

This "only church," scattered over the whole county, and some parts of three or four of the adjoining counties, could never meet in one place. At, or soon after, the Revolution it was divided into several distinct churches, which exist to this day ; such as Tredustan, Brecon, Gwenddwr, Troedrihiwdalar and Llanwrtyd, in Brecknockshire ; Maesyronen, in Radnorshire ; Merthyr Tydvil, in Glamorganshire ; and Cefnarthen, in Caermarthenshire. The Antipædobaptists, who were connected with this church, separated about 1698, and formed themselves into a church, at Maesyberllan, near Brecon.

"CARDIGANSHIRE.—There are general (several ?) parties of people professing godliness in this county, yet but one entire church in it ; namely, that which meets at Llanbadarnvawr, being the first original gathered church in this county, of the judgment commonly called Independent, but very moderate. Mr. David Jones, of Penbryn, is their pastor ; Morgan Howells and Evan Hughes, elders ; John Jones, elder elect ; together with some deacons. There are also here a party of Baptists, under imposition of hands, that are joined to Mr. William Jones's church in Caermarthenshire, whereof hereafter. There are also here several members of Mr. Stephen Hughes's church ; namely, Caermarthenshire."

The original church in this county, before the close of the seventeenth century, was divided into several distinct churches, which respectively met at Kellan, Cilgwyn, Crugymaen, Abermeurig, Blaenpenal, and Llwynrhys. These churches, for above eighty years, were presided over by a succession of Independent ministers, eminent for their learning, piety, and evangelical views ; but about the year 1762, or soon after, some parties began to propagate Arian sentiments in the congregations at Kellan, Cilgwyn, and Crugymaen, and those sentiments

ultimately prevailed. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, Mr. Thomas Gray, the pastor of the churches at Abermeurig, Blaenpenal, and Llwynrhys or Llwynypiod, joined the Calvinistic Methodists, and induced his people to follow his example. The present Independent churches in those districts are, therefore, modern interests, and not properly a regular succession from "the original gathered church in this county."

"CAERMARTHENSHIRE.—Mr. Stephen Hughes aforesaid is a pastor of the original church that was in this county, and are properly Independent in their judgment, not much differing from Presbyterian. The names of their officers I do not know, only Mr. William Lloyd, a blind man, and yet seeing, is one that teaches commonly amongst them, as also Mr. David Jones. *Vide* Glamorganshire.

"There is also a church of a later standing here, whereof Mr. William Jones aforesaid is pastor; Griffith Howells and Thomas David Rees, elders. Their other officers I cannot name. As for their judgment, see Cardiganshire. Their meeting place is at Llanvair, upon the borders of Pembrokeshire; sometimes also in Cardiganshire, and sometimes hard by Narberth, in Pembrokeshire.

"There is also another church, consisting of Baptists for the most part, but for free communion, who meet at Llanvairybryn, near Llandovery, in this county. They were called at first by the ministry of Mr. Jenkin Jones, and gathered as part of the church in Llanigon, in Breconshire. *Vide* Brecknockshire. But they were scattered, and lay desolate for a time, yet now of late they are much revived, and have rallied together again. They intend to make choice of Mr. Rees Prytherch, a worthy, well-qualified person, for their pastor. Other officers they have none, except it be one deacon. There is also another party of professing people, in a remote corner joining upon Glamorganshire, namely, at Llangenych. Some of these are part of Mr. Stephen Hughes's church aforesaid; another part, being Baptists, do join with those in Glamorganshire, as you may see further in the account given of that county."

Mr. Stephen Hughes's church was a considerable body of people scattered over almost the whole county, and the ad-

joining districts of the counties of Cardigan, Pembroke, and Glamorgan. When liberty was secured to the Nonconformists by the Toleration Act, it was divided into eleven distinct churches, all of which, after undergoing the various changes of time, exist, and are in a prosperous condition at the present time—viz, Henllan, Trelech, St. Clears, Caermarthen, Llanybree, Llanedi, Capel Isaac, Pantteg, Pencader, and Rhydybont, in Caermarthenshire, and Pantycreuddyn, or Horeb, in Cardiganshire.

Mr. William Jones's church branched off to Glandwr, in Cardiganshire, in 1696; to Newcastle Emlyn in 1698; and Cilvowyr, in Pembrokeshire, in 1704. Several other branches of it were formed into churches in the eighteenth century.

The church at Llanvairybryn prospered greatly under the ministry of Mr. Rees Prytherch. It became thoroughly Independent before his death. No church in the Principality has been more signally favoured with powerful revivals, from time to time, than this. Its places of worship are Cefnarthen and Pentretygwyn, near Llandovery.

"CAERNARVONSHIRE.—The original and only gathered church here is that which commonly meets at Llanarmon and Llanybi, in this county, which was called by the ministry of Mr. John Williams, lately deceased, and gathered by him. They are wholly Independent in judgment, except it be one member, and that none of the meanest of them for zeal and godliness, that is a Baptist. His name is Thomas Williams, who lived in London several years of late. They are destitute of a pastor at present, only one William Rowlands is their teaching elder, together with Thomas Williams, and some others, exercising their gifts among them."

Llanarmon and Llanybi are in the immediate neighbourhood of Pwllheli. This remarkable church, though subjected to the most barbarous and almost uninterrupted persecutions from 1662 to 1750, has wonderfully prospered amidst all its sufferings, and has been instrumental, directly or indirectly, in planting evangelical Nonconforming churches throughout the counties of Caernarvon and Anglesea.

"DENBIGHSHIRE.—The first foundation of a gospel ministry

here was laid by Mr. Walter Cradock, at a town called Wrexham, and was afterwards gathered into gospel order by Mr. Morgan Lloyd. Now, since their late removal and renewal, Mr. John Evans, a person of great sobriety and godliness, is become their pastor; Mr. John Brown, Captain William Wynne, Philip Rogers, and others, elders; Evan Roberts, with others, deacons. They were Independents in judgment from the beginning, yet are they very moderate, so that some few Baptists are of their society.

“There was also a gathered Presbyterian church at Denbigh town, whereof Mr. William Jones was pastor. But how they stand now I cannot give any perfect account of it. And some of Wrexham church do meet at (*Glynceiriog?*) near Chirk Castle.”

A division took place in the church at Wrexham about the year 1692. Dr. Daniel Williams, being a native of Wrexham, and most probably in his youth a member of this church, great interest was naturally felt there in the controversy in which he was then engaged against the sentiments of Dr. Crisp. Some of the members sympathized with Dr. Williams, and embraced his views, whilst others most intemperately defended Dr. Crisp's views. The consequence was a secession and the formation of a Presbyterian church. The original church consisted then of Independents and some Antipædobaptists; but after Mr. John Evans's death in 1700, the Independents gradually lost ground, until at last it became a thoroughly Antipædobaptist society. We learn from the testimony of Mr. Hugh Owen, of Bronyclydwr, that antagonistic views of baptism proved very injurious to the cause at Wrexham. This church, about the middle of the eighteenth century, was in a very declining state, and almost extinct.

The Presbyterian church at Denbigh was scattered by the severity of persecution; but about the year 1687, through the persevering labours of Mr. James Owen, of Oswestry, it was revived and formed anew, and has existed ever since.

“FLINTSHIRE.—Here has been no professing people in all these late times, except it be some few ancient followers of the ministry of the word, who never joined into any gathered

church. Until now of late, within these four years, it pleased the Lord to send the ministry of the gospel among them, which, through the blessing of the Lord of the harvest, so prevailed as that they have a constant private meeting among them at this time. The few old hearts that were alive are revived, many young ones called, a party whereof are joined to Wrexham church within this twelve months, and another party do walk with Mr. William Jones aforesaid, who lives in that neighbourhood. *Vide* Denbigh. They are in the whole between twenty and thirty, and are most of them Independents in judgment, some leaning towards presbytery."

It appears that this small church met somewhere about Caergwrle and the parish of Hope, on the south-eastern side of the county. It was probably dissolved, or became extinct soon after the death of the pastor in 1679, for we find no account of it in any record after that time. A church was gathered at Newmarket, a village on the northern side of the county, about the close of the seventeenth century, which exists to this day. The town hall, being the private property of John Wynne, Esq., was converted by him into a meeting-house in 1701, and transferred to trustees for the use of Protestant Dissenters for ever. This was the first Nonconformist place of worship in this county.

"GLAMORGANSHIRE.—The first gathered churches in this county were those of Merthyr, which is part now of Llanigon church. *Vide* Brecknockshire. And also the church that meets at Swansea, gathered at first by Mr. Ambrose Mostyn. They are all Independent in judgment for aught I know; Mr. Higgs being their pastor, Mr. David Jones and others their elders.

"There is another church, commonly called the church of Cadogstone, who meet now commonly at Baglan; Mr. Robert Thomas being their pastor, Mr. Jacob Christopher and Richard Cradock their teaching elders. What other officers they have I know not. Their judgment is Independent; some of them are Baptists, as hath been affirmed. Part of them also lie about Llangyfelach, as also about Cynffyg, in the said county. There are also several scattered Baptists inhabiting about

Gower land, Llangyfelach, the borders of Caermarthenshire, as also about Baglan, who make up, as I suppose, one church; Lewis Thomas, Howell Thomas (if he be alive), and Thomas Joseph, being their teachers. I cannot certainly determine whether they have any chosen pastor or other officers among them.

"There is also another gathered church of Baptists, who met heretofore at Llantrissant, in this county, but do now commonly meet at Gellygaer, whose pastor, Thomas John (or Jones), an honest, moderate, useful man, is lately deceased. Captain Evans, Mr. Evan Thomas, are the chief among them; but who their officers be at present I do not so fully know. Part of this church also do commonly meet at Craigyrallt.

"One Mr. Samuel Jones, supposed to be a Presbyterian in judgment, but a godly, well-qualified, moderate person, has gathered a church, within these two or three years, at Llangynwydfawr, in this county. What their constitution is, and what officers they have, I cannot give an account of it."

The church at Swansea became Arminian, or rather Pelagian, under the ministry of Mr. Solomon Harries, who died in 1785; and thoroughly Unitarian under his successor, Mr. Richard Aubrey.

"The church of Cadogstone" at first consisted of "Catabaptists, Anabaptists, and Independents;" but during the pastorate of Mr. Lewis Davies, Mr. Robert Thomas's successor, it became exclusively Independent. Mr. Bussey Mansel, of Britton Ferry, one of the Commissioners in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, and father-in-law of Lord Vernon, was a distinguished member of this church. He gave all the timber to build the first chapel at Cwarelaubach, near the town of Neath.¹ This church, soon after the Revolution, was divided into five distinct churches; viz., Neath, Ty'rdwncyn, or Mynyddbach, Cwmllynfell, Gellyonen, and Blaengwrach. The first three continue to the present time in a prosperous condition as Independent churches; but the other two, about the close of the last century, became Unitarian."

The Antipædobaptist church "about Gower land" was the

¹ Edmund Jones's MSS.

first church of that denomination in Wales. It was formed at Ilston in 1649, from which place it removed to Swansea, where it still exists. Branches of it were formed into distinct churches at Llanelly, Caermarthenshire, and Penyfai, near Bridgend, Glamorganshire, early in the eighteenth century.

The church which formerly met at Llantrissant erected a meeting-house at Hengoed, in the parish of Gellygaer, in 1710, where a large and flourishing church still exists. This church has been blessed from time to time with a succession of ministers eminent for piety and gifts. Several branches of it have been formed into distinct churches in the counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth.

Mr. Samuel Jones's church, after the Revolution, erected two places of worship; one at Bettws, and the other at Bridgend. Mr. Jones was succeeded by Mr. Rees Price, father of Dr. Richard Price, who died in 1739; and he was succeeded by Mr. Lewis Jones, one of the most eloquent preachers of the age. On the death of Mr. Samuel Price, the pastor, in 1806, owing to some disagreement respecting the choice of a successor, the bulk of the congregations withdrew, and erected two new chapels, leaving the old ones and the endowments in the hands of the only surviving trustee, who gave them over to the Unitarians, and they still hold them.

“MERIONETHSHIRE.—The few professing people that were heretofore in this county were joined either to Wrexham church, or else to Mr. Vavasor Powell's, that met in Montgomeryshire, whereof hereafter; but since the change most of them turned Quakers, and so continue. Yet of their elders, one Mr. Hugh Owen, of Bronclydwr, a kinsman of Dr. Owen's, is settled in that county, and being ordained a teaching elder of Wrexham church, is sent to those parts to exercise his ministry; so that, of late, the Lord helping them to be faithful and diligent in the Lord's vineyard, and crowning his labours with a considerable blessing, they are about gathering them into church order, whereof I can give no certain account yet, only that there are none in all that county, that I know of, that are otherwise than of an Independent judgment, except the new crew of Quakers aforesaid.”

Mr. Hugh Owen's ministry proved eminently successful throughout this county and some parts of the counties of Caernarvon and Montgomery. He was succeeded by his son-in-law, Mr. Edward Kenrick, who was ordained in 1702, and died in 1741. Mr. Kenrick, though a good and learned man, does not appear to have been so successful as his predecessor. The cause was in a very declined state some years before his death, but about that time it was remarkably revived through the labours of Mr. Lewis Rees, Mr. Jenkin Morgan, and others, and has continued ever since to progress.

“MONMOUTHSHIRE.—The original church gathered in this county was the first in all Wales that I can hear of. Holy and reverend Mr. Wroth was the first gospel preacher here. The ancient, original materials of a church were called by his ministry, and cast into the mould of church order, according to the New England way, in his days. After his decease, Mr. Walter Cradock was chosen pastor of it, who was assistant before to old Mr. Wroth. After some time the church was divided into two parts, which so continues to this day, and are, indeed, two numerical distinct churches; the one whereof meets at Llantrissant or Llangwm, in this county, which consisteth mostly of Baptists, if not almost all, but are in judgment for free communion with saints as saints. Their pastor elect is Mr. Thomas Quarrell, who was chosen now of late since Mr. William Thomas's death, their late pastor, and repairer of their desolations that happened to them since the change. Mr. Christopher Price, physician, Captain Robert Jones, and Mr. Millman being elders. The other church is that which meets commonly at Magor, in the Moors, towards Severn Sea. Mr. Thomas Barnes is pastor thereof; Mr. Samuel Jones, Major Blethyn, and Mr. Rumsay, as I take it, are the elders. They are, I suppose, wholly Independent in judgment. Other officers they may have which I cannot name.

“The second gathered church, that was in this county from the beginning, is that whereof Mr. Henry Walter is pastor, who by his ministry at Mynyddislwyn, was the instrument to call most or all the original members thereof. He did also bring them to church order, and continues still their pastor. Mr.

John Powell and Watkin Jones are teaching elders. The members of the church lie scattered about Mynyddislwyn aforesaid, Newport, and Blaenau-gwent. They are altogether of an Independent judgment, except some few Baptists that be of their church ; but they are moderate and free in their communion.

“The third church, that was of a later date than any of the former, is that which meets at Llanwenarth, near Abergavenny. They were at first, as far as I know, wholly consisting of Baptists ; but, after that persuasion about imposition of hands prevailed among them, they divided. For that party that were only for baptism joined in time with the church of Llantrissant aforesaid, and so continued walking with them. The other party, for imposition of hands, continued still by themselves ; William John Prichard, Francis Gyles, David James, being their teaching elders.

“There are some members of this people about Blaenau-gwent, in this county ; some others in Brecknockshire, aforesaid ; and some about Olchon, in Herefordshire: Thomas Watkins being their teacher there.”

For an account of Mr. Wroth and Mr. Henry Walter's churches, see the Appendix. That branch of Mr. Wroth's church which met at Llantrissant, Llangwm, and Usk, appears to have been from 1669 to 1675, and possibly for some years later, one of the largest and wealthiest Nonconforming churches in Wales. But it gradually declined, so that about the time of Mr. Quarrell's death, in 1709, it was very nearly extinct. Two small Independent interests branched out of it about or a little before that time, and were formed into churches at Goetre and Usk ; and the Antipædobaptists continued to preach both at Usk and Llangwm for forty years after, but with very little, if any success. Mr. Edmund Watkins, about 1770, gathered two small congregations here. This church furnishes a sad instance of the ruinous effect of mixed communion. No sight could be more agreeable to a Christian's feelings, than to see multitudes of Christ's followers, of evangelical denominations, uniting *occasionally* to commemorate their Lord's death ; but the history of Nonconformity in Wales proves to a demonstration, that

nothing has proved a greater hindrance to the progress of religion than the attempt, though well-meant, to unite *permanently* in church-fellowship parties of different religious views, *especially on the subject of baptism*. History testifies that the unmixed churches of both persuasions have been the most prosperous from age to age, while the mixed ones continued in the most declined state; until the one party had so preponderated as to make the other's influence too weak to be felt.

The church at Llanwenarth has been prosperous ever since its formation in 1652, and is at this day in a flourishing condition. That branch of it at Olchon, on the borders of Herefordshire, still exists.

"MONTGOMERYSHIRE.—The only gathered church in this county was that whereof Vavasor Powell was pastor. It was by his ministry that they were originally called, and by him gathered into church order. Upon his great trials and troubles it was much scattered, and made desolate; but there is a remnant it of survived and rallied together again, who have chosen Mr. Henry Williams, a great and faithful sufferer in late times, to be their pastor. Worthy Captain Prise, their elder and pillar, is dead this last year. Walter Griffith is another elder, as I take it. What other officers they have, I cannot give any certain account of it. These are Baptists in judgment, for the most part, yet many of them otherwise; but they are for free communion."

After the death of Mr. Henry Williams, in 1685, the church was assisted for many years by Mr. Hugh Owen, of Merionethshire; Mr. James Owen, of Oswestry; and Mr. Reynold Wilson, one of its members, who is described in the Records of the London Presbyterian Board as an itinerant preacher.¹ It appears from this that he was not considered as the *pastor* of the church. On the establishment of religious liberty, in 1688, this general church, scattered over the whole county, was

¹ Mr. Thomas, in 'Hanes y Bedyddwyr,' says that Mr. Wilson was an Antipædobaptist; but how can that agree with the fact of his receiving the grants of the Presbyterian Board from 1690 to 1713? The Presbyterians of that time were not on such very friendly terms with the "Anabaptists," as to vote annual grants for twenty-three years to support one of their preachers.

divided into several branches. Houses were fitted up, and recorded as places of worship, at Newtown, Trefeglwys, Llanbryn-mair, Bragginton, Llanfyllin, and other places. Mr. Rice Protheroe was ordained, in 1702, as pastor of some, if not all, of these congregations; and on his removal to Cardiff, in 1712, was succeeded by Mr. William Jervice, who laboured in this county till his death, in 1743.

“PEMBROKESHIRE.—The only church extant at this time in this county is that which meets at or about Haverfordwest, which was gathered at first by Mr. Peregrine Phillips, who is still the pastor of it. It has been much shattered of late years, between the troubles of the times and the Quakers. Captain Longman, as I take it, is elder of it; and Hugh Harries deacon. They are Independent in their judgment. What Baptists be in this county do join with Mr. William Jones’s people, who meet in the borders of Caermarthenshire. *Vide* Caermarthenshire. There was another gathered church here before the late changes, when Mr. Thomas Warren was pastor, — teaching elder. But the pastor and teacher returned to England upon the change, so that this church was so dissipated between the world and the Quakers that it is long since extinct; except some few that continued faithful, who have since joined with the church at Haverfordwest.

“In Pembrokeshire there is a small company lately gathered into church order by Mr. James Davies, a moderate Presbyterian, for anything I know. These meet at Captain Jenkin Jones’s house, which Mr. Jones is a teacher among them. These people, or most of them at least, were in church order before, being gathered originally by Mr. Charles Price, who was their pastor, and so continued till the scattering times came.”

Mr. Phillips was succeeded, in 1691, by Mr. Thomas Davies, a native of Llanybree, in Caermarthenshire. During Mr. Davies’s pastorate, branches of the mother church were formed into distinct churches at Pembroke, and Trefgarn, near St. David’s. The church at Trefgarn has been remarkably prosperous ever since its formation, and is at the present time one of the strongest churches in Wales.

Mr. James Davies’s church still exists in a flourishing con-

dition at Llechryd, near Cardigan. Those large churches at Brynberian and Trewyddel, in Pembrokeshire, and Trewen in Cardiganshire, are branches of it, formed early in the eighteenth century.

“RADNORSHIRE.—The first man that laid the foundation of a gospel work here was Mr. Walter Cradock, who preached for some continued time at Llanfair Waterdine, on the borders of this county. Then, after his time, Mr. Vavasor Powell carried on the work, and gathered here a church, a remnant whereof remaineth until this day, and have renewed their communion within these three or four years as a gospel church. They have no chosen pastor as yet, only Mr. Henry Williams, pastor of the church in Montgomeryshire, assisteth them *pro tempore* in their church meeting, for the most part; and sometimes Henry Maurice, pastor of the church at Llanigon, in Brecknockshire, dispenseth the ordinances of the gospel among them. This church consisteth partly of Independents, and partly of Baptists. John James, Maurice Griffyths, elders; Edward Owens, deacon.

“There is another people in the west end of this county, who are Baptists in judgment, and Arminians also for the most part. They meet at Peter Gregory’s house, Henry Gregory being their teaching elder. Jeremy — lived for some time amongst these people. Some part of them live in the north of Brecknockshire, as aforesaid.

“There is also a late congregation, gathered by Mr. John Weaver, of New Radnor, a Presbyterian Nonconforming minister; but I can give no account of their officers.

“Mercy and peace be on all them that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Amen!”

After the Revolution, the Pædobaptists throughout the county were formed into separate Independent churches, which afterwards met at Maesyronen, Maesgwyn, Rhayader, and Gyrn, in the parish of Disserth. An Antipædobaptist church was formed at Glasgwm, and several of those who had been members of the original church probably joined with Mr. Henry Gregory’s people. Nonconformity in Radnorshire was comparatively strong till about the middle of the last century; but since that time it has rather lost than gained ground.

The Welsh Nonconformists, amidst all their sufferings, and under the greatest disadvantages, were unceasing in their efforts to propagate religious knowledge among their countrymen, from the pulpit and the press. Both ministers and people, as we have seen, exposed themselves to endless troubles by holding meetings for preaching and hearing the Word of God ; but if they had foreborne to do so the nation would have sunk into heathen darkness, for the generality of the clergy were either glaringly inefficient or sinfully negligent.

In an address to the Welsh clergy, prefixed to a Welsh book entitled "*Carwr y Gymry*," *i.e.*, "The Lover of the Welsh People," published in the year 1677, by an anonymous, but evidently a pious clergyman, we have the following account of the character of those appointed by law to be the spiritual teachers of the people :—"My heart often aches in witnessing and considering the great deficiency and sad neglect of painstaking efforts to teach our flocks conscientiously, manifested amongst us, the Welsh clergy, and our want of application with full purpose of heart to reading, to exhortation, and doctrine ; 1 Tim. iv. 13. We are ourselves (many of us) unskilful in the Word of Righteousness, and therefore unable and unfit to teach others. Clergymen of commendable learning and fluent speech are to be met with often in Wales ; and yet, in many parts of the country, a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of Heaven, bringing forth out of his treasure things new and old, is seldom to be seen. Yea, permit me, my dear brethren, to tell you (what I am sorry to be obliged to tell), that there are to be found in each of the Welsh dioceses from forty to sixty churches without a sermon on Sundays, in the long days of summer, when the weather is fine and the roads dry !" The clergy would neither do the work themselves, nor suffer the Nonconformists to do it for them, but at the peril of their lives. Certainly the walls of Jerusalem were then built in troublous times, but they were built.

"In the times of the Stuarts, dissent from the Episcopal church became once more an object of persecution ; but the ministers of the Welsh Nonconformists still continued to traverse the wild hills of the Principality, braving all dangers for the

sake of their few (not so few) and scattered followers. Their congregations still occasionally met, but it was in fear and trembling, generally at midnight, or in woods and caverns, amid the gloomy recesses of the mountains."¹

The Nonconformists availed themselves of the service of the press, as well as the pulpit, to disseminate religious knowledge in the Principality: and considering the various difficulties they had to encounter, they accomplished wondrous things in this department of Christian usefulness. It cannot be easily conceived, in the present age, what were the expense and trouble of publishing Welsh books at that time. There were no printing offices in Wales, nor probably Welsh compositors in any printing office in London or Oxford; it was, therefore, necessary to keep a competent Welsh scholar always on the spot to correct the press, and his patience was not a little taxed by the numberless errors of the compositors; while they, on the other hand, looked at his corrected proof sheets with faces indicative of anything but complacency. Mr. Stephen Hughes, Mr. Charles Edwards, and others, had to spend a vast deal of their time in London when they had Welsh works in the press. The promoters of Welsh literature at that time were also greatly discouraged, and even opposed, by many persons of influence and authority, who thought that no books should have been printed in the Welsh language, in order to induce the people to learn the English. That opinion has operated most disastrously against the intellectual and spiritual advancement of the Welsh nation, ever since the Reformation.²

Several small volumes—original compositions and translations from the English—on doctrinal, practical, and devotional subjects, were published from the year 1600 to 1662, most of which appeared during the interregnum; and the following is a list of Welsh books published by Nonconformists during the reigns of Charles II. and James II.:—

1664.

The Assembly's Catechism, to which is added the Thirty-Nine

¹ Johnes's "Causes of Dissent in Wales," second edition, p. 8.

² S. Hughes's Preface to "The Welshman's Candle," ed. 1672.

Articles of the Church of England, probably published by Mr. S. Hughes and Mr. David Jones.

1670.

The Third Part of Mr. Rees Prichard's Poems. The dedication and preface were written by Mr. S. Hughes, at whose expense the work was published.

1671.

A small octavo Edition of the Bible. It is supposed that about 6,000 copies were printed, and that our forefathers were indebted for this boon to Mr. Thomas Gouge and Mr. S. Hughes.

The Whole Duty of Man, to which is added a treatise on particular piety on ordinary as well as extraordinary occasions. This volume was published by Mr. T. Gouge, at his own expense.

1672.

The Book of Psalms, in Prose and Metre, with the New Testament, in one volume, published at the expense of Mr. Gouge and Mr. Hughes.

The Welshman's Candle, in one large octavo volume, published by Mr. S. Hughes.

1675.

Mr. Gouge's Christian Directions to Walk with God, translated by Mr. Richard Jones, of Denbigh. Three thousand five hundred copies of this valuable work were given to the poor by the benevolent author.

A Short Treatise, by the same author, against drunkenness, uncleanness, profane swearing, and lying.

The Practice of Piety, published at the expense of Mr. Gouge and Mr. Hughes.

1676.

Gouge's Word to Sinners, and a Word to Saints, translated by Mr. William Jones, of Denbigh.

Gouge's Principles of the Christian Religion, translated by Mr. William Jones.

1677.

Trysor i'r Cymry; i.e., A Treasure to the Welsh. This volume consists of a sermon on repentance, by Mr. Arthur Dent; a mirror of three sorts of people—the non-Christian, the false Christian, and the true Christian, by Mr. Oliver Thomas, one of the approvers in the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales; and Mr. R. Baxter's "Now or Never," translated by Mr. R. Jones, of Denbigh. Mr. S. Hughes wrote the preface, and the volume was probably published at his expense.

Baxter's Call to the Unconverted. This was also translated by Mr. R. Jones, and published by Mr. S. Hughes.

Perkins's Exposition of the Lord's Prayer, published by Mr. S. Hughes.

An octavo Edition of the Bible. Mr. S. Hughes was the editor, and Mr. T. Gouge was his principal supporter in bearing the expenses. This was incomparably superior to any previous edition of the Welsh Bible for correctness and elegance. Eight thousand copies were printed, 1,000 of which were immediately given away to the poor, and the rest were reserved, and disposed in proper places, to be sold at four shillings per copy, bound.

A New Edition of V. Powell's Saving Faith, under the title, "Canwyll Crist."

1679.

A New Edition of the Assembly's Catechism, probably published by Mr. David Jones.

1680.

Unum Necessarium, sive Practicæ Orationis, or a Practical Treatise on Prayer. By Mr. John Thomas.

1681.

Two Pamphlets against Conjurors, &c., by Mr. S. Hughes.
A New Edition of The Welshman's Candle, published by Mr. Hughes and Mr. D. Jones.

1682.

The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven, published by Mr. Hughes and others.

1684.

The Book of the Resolution. This work was originally written in English by the notorious Jesuit, Robert Parsons, and was translated into Welsh, in 1632, by the celebrated Dr. John Davies, of Mallwyd. The Welsh translation does not contain any Popish sentiment; but it is evident that Mr. S. Hughes, the editor of the second edition, did not consider it sufficiently evangelical in its tone. He therefore appended to it a treatise, by Mr. T. Gouge, on relying upon Christ alone for salvation.

1685.

Trugaredd a Barn; i.e., Mercy and Judgment. By Mr. James Owen. This small volume, which was one of the most popular works in the Welsh language in former ages, consists of striking anecdotes of God's mercy to His people, and His judgments on the ungodly. The pious author recommends this book to his countrymen, instead of the monkish tales and romantic fables with which they used to divert themselves in winter evenings, and at other idle times.

This list does not contain all the Welsh books published by Nonconformists in these years; but not being able to ascertain the correct titles of several of their publications, we could not insert them in our list.

Mr. Charles Edwards, a very accomplished Welsh scholar, and the author of that valuable book entitled *Hanes y Ffydd—i.e.,* The History of the Faith, first published in 1671—rendered important assistance to Mr. S. Hughes, and others, in the publication of several of the fore-named works. Some have asserted that he was a lay member of the Church of England; but it is much more probable that he was a moderate Nonconformist, of the same stamp as Mr. S. Hughes and Mr. Thomas Gouge.

Mr. S. Hughes and Mr. T. Gouge, the chief promoters of the publication of Welsh books during this period, were generously assisted in their benevolent schemes by a few liberal Churchmen, such as Archbishop Tillotson, Dr. William Thomas, Dean of Worcester, afterwards Bishop of St. David's;

Mr. Hugh Edwards, of Llangadock, in Caermarthenshire ; and Mr. David Thomas, of Margam, in Glamorganshire ; but the generality of Churchmen were either indifferent, or violently opposed their proceedings.

It is worthy of notice, that of *ten* editions of the Scriptures in the Welsh language, issued from 1641 to 1690, five of the whole Bible, and five of the New Testament separately, only one folio edition, of about 1,000 copies, for the pulpits of the parish churches, was published by Churchmen. The nation was indebted to the Nonconformists for the other nine, which consisted of about 30,000 copies of the Bible, and as many, if not 10,000 more, of the New Testament. This supply was very inadequate to the wants of the people ; but it was at least ten times more than they had in the hundred years which elapsed from the Reformation to the rise of Nonconformity. If the question were asked, what the Bishops, and those hosts of learned Doctors of Divinity and Masters of Arts, whom Dr. Walker, in his "Sufferings of the Clergy," represents as pious, efficient, and laborious ministers, were doing at this time, when "there was famine in the land for the word of the Lord"?—the reply would be, that they were only enjoying their rich livings, and devising plans to annoy, persecute, and plunder their inoffensive neighbours, the Nonconformists, who, amidst all their trouble, were "instant in season and out of season," feeding the hungry souls of the people with the bread of life.

We have had repeated occasions, in the foregoing pages, to mention the name of THOMAS GOUGE, A.M., a name which should ever be held in grateful remembrance by every Welshman. This excellent man was the son of Dr. William Gouge, of Blackfriars, London. He was born at Bow, in Middlesex, Sept. 19, 1605, and was educated, first at Eton school, and afterwards at King's College, Cambridge, which he entered in the year 1626. After he had finished his course of studies, and taken his degrees, he left the University and his fellowship, being presented to the living of Colsden, near Croyden, in Surrey, where he continued two or three years, and then removed to St. Sepulchre's, in London, in 1638, a large and populous parish, in which, with solicitude and pains, he dis-

charged all the duties of a faithful minister twenty-four years. Besides his constant preaching, he was diligent and charitable in visiting the sick ; not only ministering spiritual counsel and comfort to them, but liberally relieving the necessities of the poor. Every morning through the year he catechized in the church, chiefly the poorer sort, who were generally the most ignorant, and especially the aged, who had most leisure. To encourage them to come for instruction, he once a week distributed money among them ; but changed the day, to oblige them to a constant attendance. As for the poor who were able to get their own living, he set them to work, buying flax and hemp for them to spin. He paid them for their work, and sold it, as he could, among his friends. By this means he rescued many from idleness, poverty, and vice. Notwithstanding his activity and eminent usefulness, the Act of Uniformity drove him from this important field of labour, which he so well cultivated.

It is not known when, or by what means, Mr. Gouge was led to turn his charitable attention to Wales. We have already stated that Mr. Stephen Hughes and Mr. Charles Edwards were often in London, when they had Welsh books in the press, and nothing would be more natural than the supposition that he might have come in contact with them there, and that their representation of the destitute state of their countrymen led him to select the Principality as his future sphere of usefulness.

Dr. Tillotson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, in his funeral sermon for Mr. Gouge, has given us the following account of his benevolent labours in and for Wales :—"For about nine or ten years last past he did almost wholly apply his charity to Wales, because there he judged was most occasion for it : and because this was a very great work, he did not only lay out upon it whatever he could spare out of his own estate, but employed his whole time and pains to excite and engage the charity of others for his assistance in it. And in this he had two excellent designs ; one, to have poor children brought up to read and write, and to be carefully instructed in the principles of religion ; the other, to furnish persons of grown

age, the poor especially, with the necessary helps and means of knowledge, as the Bible, and other books of piety and devotion, in their own language : to which end he procured the ‘ Church Catechism,’ ‘ The Practice of Piety,’ and that best of books, ‘ The Whole Duty of Man,’ besides several other pious and useful treatises, some of them to be translated into the Welsh tongue, and great numbers of all of them to be printed and sent down to the chief towns in Wales, to be sold at easy rates to those that were able to buy them, and to be freely given to those that were not. And in both these designs, through the blessing of God upon his unwearied endeavours, he found very great success. For by the large and bountiful contributions, which by his own industry and prudent application were obtained from charitable persons of all ranks and conditions, from the nobility and gentry of Wales and the neighbouring counties, and several of that quality in and about London, from divers of the Right Reverend Bishops and of the clergy, and from that perpetual fountain of charity, the City of London, led on and encouraged by the most bountiful example of the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen ; to all which he constantly added two-thirds of his own estate, which, as I have been credibly informed, was two hundred pounds a year. I say by all these together, there were every year eight hundred, sometimes a thousand, poor children educated, as I said before ; and by this example, several of the most considerable towns in Wales were excited to bring up, at their own charge, the like number of poor children, in the like manner, and under his inspection and care. He likewise gave very great numbers of the books above-mentioned, both in the Welsh and English tongues, to the poorer sort, so many as were unable to buy them, and willing to read them. But, which was the greatest work of all, and amounted indeed to a mighty charge, he procured a new and very fair impression of the Bible and Liturgy of the Church of England in the Welsh tongue (the former impression being spent, and hardly twenty of them to be had in all London), to the number of eight thousand ; one thousand whereof were freely given to the poor, and the rest sent to the principal cities and towns in Wales, to

be sold to the rich at very reasonable and low rates, viz., at four shillings apiece, well bound and clasped, which was much cheaper than any English Bible was ever sold, that was of so fair a print and paper ; a work of that charge, that it was not likely to have been done any other way, and for which this age, and perhaps the next, will have great cause to thank God on his behalf.

“In these good works he employed all his time, and care, and pains, and his whole heart was in them ; so that he was very little affected with anything else, and seldom either minded or knew anything of the strange occurrences of this troublesome and busy age, such as I think are hardly to be paralleled in any other. Or if he did mind them, he scarce ever spoke anything about them. For this was the business he laid to heart, and knowing it to be so much and so certainly the will of his Heavenly Father, it was his meat and drink to be doing it ; and the good success he had in it was a continual feast to him, and gave him a perpetual serenity both of mind and countenance. His great love and zeal for this work made all the pains and difficulties of it seem nothing to him. He would rise early and sit up late ; and continued the same diligence and industry to the last, though he was in the threescore and seventeenth year of his age. And that he might manage the distribution of this great charity with his own hands, and see the good effects of it with his own eyes, he always once, but usually twice a year, at his own charge, travelled over a great part of Wales, none of the best countries to travel in. But for the love of God and men he endured all that, together with the extremity of heat and cold (which in their several seasons are both very great there), not only with patience, but with pleasure ; so that, all things considered, there have not, since the primitive times of Christianity, been many among the sons of men to whom that glorious character of the Son of God might be better applied, that he went about doing good ; and Wales may as worthily boast of this truly apostolical man as of their famous St. David, who was also very probably a good man, as those times of ignorance and superstition went.

“I will add but one thing more concerning our deceased

brother ; that though he meddled not at all in our present heats and differences as a party, having much better things to mind, yet as a looker-on he did very sadly lament them, and for several of the last years of his life he continued in the communion of our church, and, as he himself told me, thought himself in conscience bound so to do. He died in the 77th year of his age, October 29, 1681. It so pleased God that his death was very sudden, and so sudden, that in all probability he himself hardly perceived it when it happened, for he died in his sleep ; so that we may say of him, as it is said of David, after he had served his generation, according to the will of God, he fell asleep."

Dr. Tillotson carefully conceals Mr. Gouge's Nonconformity as much as he possibly can, and takes advantage of his extreme moderation to represent him as *almost* a Churchman. Parties unacquainted with the facts of the case might be led, by reading the funeral sermon, to think that Churchmen were the principal supporters of his charitable schemes for the benefit of Wales, which was not the case. His moderation and compliance with the prejudices of Churchmen, by printing the Church Catechism, and an edition of the Liturgy, bound with the Welsh Bible of 1677, secured the co-operation of some liberal Churchmen in and about London ; but there is no proof that above three or four of that party in Wales rendered him any assistance whatever ; but many of them, as we shall see, persecuted him with barbarous cruelty.

It appears that Dr. Tillotson's funeral sermon for Mr. Gouge, notwithstanding its one-sided representation of the good man's Nonconformity, gave offence to the true sons of the church in Wales. In a new edition of Powell's "History of Wales," with additions by W. Wynne, A.M., published in 1697, we have the following notice of it:—"For that learned person, in his funeral sermon for Mr. Gouge, would fain induce the world to believe that Christianity was very corrupt and imperfect among the Welsh before it was purified by that, whom he terms, 'apostolical man.' Whereas it is notoriously evident that since the Reformation was settled in that country, and the Bible, with the Book of Common Prayer, translated into the Welsh tongue,

no place has been more exact in keeping to the strict rubric and constitution of the Church of England, both as to the substance and form of worship. But what may more truly be attributed to Mr. Gouge is that, since his travels into Wales, and the propagating of his doctrine among the ignorant of that country, presbytery, which before had scarce taken root, has daily increased, and grown to a head." In reply to this strange charge of Mr. Wynne's, Dr. Calamy very properly remarks, "If the growth of Dissent in Wales be an effect of the increase of knowledge there, we cannot help that. They whose consciences are enlightened and moved by the Word of God will be always disposed to pay a greater veneration to divine truths and ordinances than to such ways and usages as are merely human; and will be naturally apt to scruple those things that want the sacred impress of divine authority. And if this gentleman thinks the best expedient to prevent this is to keep the people in the same state of ignorance they were in during the *period* of which his History treats, he has the papists on his side, but I hope none that understand Protestant principles."

Mr. Gouge's charitable labours in Wales began about the year 1670, but it appears that his schemes did not assume the form of a regular organization till the year 1674. A report of the work of that year has been preserved, which is as follows:—

"An account of what has been done in Wales this last year, from Midsummer, 1674, to Lady-day, 1675, in pursuance of the above said trust, upon the encouragement of divers worthy persons to this pious and charitable design.

"1. In fifty-one of the chief towns of Wales, 812 poor children have been and are put to school to learn English, over and above the 500 put to school the last year, by the charity of others, before this trust began.

"2. There have been brought and distributed in several families thirty-two Welsh Bibles, which were all that could be had in Wales or London.

"3. Two hundred and forty New Testaments in Welsh, to be given away to poor people that can read Welsh.

"4. Five hundred 'Whole Duty of Man,' in Welsh, to be distributed in like manner.

"Which pious and charitable undertaking hath already provoked divers of the better sort of the Welsh to put above 500 of the poorest Welsh children to school upon their account. So that about 1,850 in all are already put to school to learn to read English. Attested by us,

"JOHN TILLOTSON,	BENJAMIN WHITCHCOT,
"SIMON FORD,	RICHARD BAXTER,
"EDWARD STILLINGFLEET,	THOMAS GOUGE,
"MATTHEW POOL,	WILLIAM BATES,
"JOHN MERITON,	THOMAS FIRMIN, &c." ¹

This organization continued in operation as long as Mr. Gouge lived, but it died with him, or soon after. The great mistake was, that the children were put to school to learn *English*. That made the schools comparatively useless to the children of the poor. Mr. Stephen Hughes, in his preface to the "*Welshman's Candle*" in 1672, uses very strong language against establishing English schools in that age for the Welsh poor. Mr. Griffith Jones, in the following century, understood the tastes and wants of his countrymen better than our good English benefactor, and consequently established *Welsh* charity schools, which proved of incalculable benefit to the middle and working classes. Had Mr. Gouge adopted the same plan, his charities would have proved equally beneficial. He established in the Principality from three to four hundred schools.

It would be hardly credible that there were any in Wales sufficiently ungrateful and fiendish to persecute such a messenger of mercy as Thomas Gouge; but to the lasting shame of the High Churchmen of that age, it is recorded, that "he often preached in Wales, until they drove him from place to place by persecution. He went constantly to the parish churches, and sometimes communicated with them, and was authorized by an old University licence to preach occasionally, and yet for so doing was excommunicated *even in Wales*, and that while he was doing all this good." He gave himself, and procured from others, large sums of money to assist the poor

¹ Mr. Firmin, the Howard of that age, was an Unitarian in sentiments.

persecuted ministers of Wales, and that kindness undoubtedly greatly irritated his persecutors.¹

Dr. William Lloyd, who is said to have been a good-natured gentleman, and a declared enemy to persecution, "at his first coming to the diocese of St. Asaph, in his zeal for the Established Church, set himself with vigour to reduce Dissenters to it, and that he might do it with *the cords of a man*, he resolved, before he took any other methods, to reason the matter with them, and to endeavour their conviction by discourse, in which he had a very great felicity, both by his learning and temper. If there were any that declined discoursing with him, he improved that against them very much; urging, as he wrote afterwards to Mr. Philip Henry—"That no man can pretend conscience for not coming when he is required, to give an account of his religion to them that have authority to demand it by the laws under which he lives, and to hear from their mouths what can be said for the established religion. These are things from which conscience is so far from exempting, that the great rule of conscience requires it, as an indispensable duty, that we should be always ready to *give an account of the hope that is in us*; and that we should hear them that are in *Moses's chair*, &c.; and, therefore, those who refuse this, he should consider as men governed, not by conscience, but obstinacy.'

"He publicly discoursed with the Quakers at Llanfyllin, in Montgomeryshire; their champion was Dr. Thomas Lloyd, a physician. One of the most considerable Nonconformist ministers in his diocese was Mr. James Owen, of Oswestry, then very young, but well known since by his learned book, which he calls, 'A Plea for Scripture Ordination,' proving ordination by presbyters, without diocesan bishops, to be valid (published in the year 1694), a point of controversy which he was then obliged, in his own defence, to search into. Several discourses the Bishop had with him in private; at last, his lordship was pleased to appoint him to give him the meeting in the town hall at Oswestry, on Tuesday, September 27, 1681,

¹ Calamy, vol. ii. 8, iii. 12. Palmer, vol. i. 184. Tillotson's Works, vol. i. 213, ed. 1752. Life of James Owen, pp. 10-12.

there to give account 'by what right he exercised the ministry, not having episcopal ordination.' He directed him also to procure what other ministers he could to assist him; for he would be glad to hear what any of them had to say for themselves. The notice was very short, not above four or five days; some, whose assistance was desired, apprehended it might do more hurt than good, and might be prejudicial to their own liberty, and therefore declined it. Mr. Philip Henry, and Mr. Jonathan Roberts, of Llanvair, in Denbighshire, appeared with Mr. Owen. The Bishop came according to appointment, and brought with him, for his assistant, the famous Mr. Henry Dodwell. Mr. Henry, who was utterly a stranger to the Bishop, pressed hard to have had the discourse in private, before a select number, but it would not be granted. He also desired his lordship that it might not be expected from him, being of another diocese, to concern himself in the discourse, but only a hearer. 'No, Mr. Henry,' said the Bishop, 'it is not the concern of my diocese alone, but it is the common cause of religion; and, therefore, I shall expect you should interest yourself in it more than as a hearer.' His Lordship was pleased to promise that nothing that should be said by way of argument should be any way turned to the prejudice of the disputants, nor advantage taken of it to give them trouble. There were present divers of the clergy and gentry of the country, with the magistrates of the town, and a great number of people, which, if it could have been avoided, was not easy to Mr. Henry, who never loved anything that made a noise. The discourse began about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till between eight and nine at night; much was said, *pro* and *con.*, touching the identity of bishops and presbyters, the bishoping and unbishoping of Timothy and Titus, the validity of presbyterian ordination, &c. It was managed with a great deal of liberty, and not under the strict laws of disputation, which made it hard to give any tolerable account of the particulars of it. The arguments on both the sides may better be fetched from books written on the subject than from such a discourse. The Bishop managed his part of the conference with a great deal of gravity, calmness, and

evenness of spirit, and therein gave an excellent pattern to all that are in such stations. Mr. Henry's remark upon this business, in his diary, is this:—"That whereas many reports went abroad, far and near, concerning it, every one passing their judgment upon the result of it as they stood affected; for my own part," saith he, "upon reflection, I find that I have great reason to be ashamed of my manifold infirmities and imperfections; and yet do bless God that, seeing I could manage it no better to do the truth more service, there was not more said and done to its disservice. To God be glory!" But there were others who said that Mr. Henry was an instrument of glorifying God, and serving the church, in that affair, almost as much as in anything that he ever did, except the preaching of the gospel. And some, who were adversaries to the cause he pleaded, though they were not convinced by his arguments, yet by his great meekness and humility, and that truly Christian spirit which appeared so evidently in the whole management, were brought to have a better opinion of him, and the way in which he walked.

"The conference broke up a little abruptly. The Bishop and Mr. Henry being somewhat close at an argument, in the recapitulation of what had been discoursed of, Mr. Jonathan Roberts whispered to Mr. Henry, 'Pray let my lord have the last word!' which a justice of the peace upon the bench over-hearing, presently replied—"You say my lord shall have the last word, but he shall not; for I will. We thank God, we have the sword of power in our hands; and, by the grace of God, we will keep it, and it shall not rust; and I hope every lawful magistrate will do as I do. And look to yourselves, gentlemen; by the grace of God, I will root you out of the country." To which a forward man in the crowd said—"Amen! Throw them down stairs!" This the Bishop heard with silence, but the Mayor of the town took order for their safety."¹

Although his lordship did not succeed in convincing his Nonconforming brethren, he ever after held them in the highest estimation. He often corresponded with the amiable

¹ P. Henry's Life, by Sir J. B. Williams, pp. 85-87, and also pp. 192-8.

Philip Henry, and in the year 1687, "as he was passing through Oswestry, he sent for Mr. James Owen, and ventured to acquaint him with the secret of the Prince of Orange's invitation by some great persons, in which he had joined; and added, he hoped the Protestant Dissenters would concur in promoting the common interest; 'for you and we are brethren,' says he; 'we have indeed been angry brethren, but we have seen our folly, and are resolved if ever we have it in our power that we will treat you as brethren.'"¹

Our account of this period shall be closed with a few biographical sketches.

HENRY MAURICE.

He was the youngest son of Griffith Maurice, of Methlan, in the promontory of Lley, Caernarvonshire. He matriculated at Jesus College, Oxford, in the year 1652. His childhood and youth were vanity. When he became a preacher, the popular applause he met with proved a great temptation to him, as he afterwards complained, calling himself a vainglorious fellow. We learn, from his own written account, that he was, for some time after entering the ministry, a loose, immoral character. His persecutors, after his conversion, often manifested their satanic disposition by upbraiding him and his friends with the former irregularities of his conduct. He feelingly refers to that in his Diary for July 20, 1672:—"Mr. Kinaston tells me that the Bishop of Bangor and some others did reproach me with some former evils and miscarriages of my life, before the Lord was pleased in His infinite mercy to visit me; and I found the Lord (as I imagined) supported my spirit from being discouraged herewith, but desiring to pity them that envy me the grace of God." He thus writes, June 18, 1672, on the same subject:—"Engaging in discourse this evening with Mrs. King (in Radnorshire) about Mr. Lloyd, I was much affected with the hearing of his lewd and vile courses, and reflected therefrom upon myself, as also upon my own former vile ways; and considering what God has done for me, and what otherwise had become of me, if God had left me to

¹ Neal's Puritans, vol. v. p. 58.

myself, these things so moved my heart that I was fain to quit the house, and get into the coppice there to pray, where I sought the Lord with much earnestness, having some brokenness, but nothing so much as I longed for, for my heart was ready to burst, as it were, yet could not freely weep." He was ordained some time before the Restoration, and settled at Broomfield, near Ludlow, where he conformed in 1662. He afterwards removed to Church Stretton, in Shropshire—a living then worth £140 a year. He held this living till it pleased God to visit the town with a malignant fever, whereby many of his parishioners were cut off; and by which providence he was awakened to a great solicitude about his everlasting state. He consequently became much dissatisfied with his conformity, and could not be easy in his mind till he had resolved to quit his living, though he was £300 in debt, chiefly contracted by annexing some outbuildings to the parsonage house. He had kept the cause of his trouble to himself, till his wife, who was a woman of courage, surprising him in his retirement, told him she was determined not to part from him a moment till he communicated it to her. He then told her he could not be satisfied to continue any longer at Church Stretton, as minister of that place; and that he was much concerned for her and her child as to their future subsistence. She desired him to do as his conscience directed, and assured him she could freely resign herself and her child to the providence of God, whose care of them she did not at all distrust. This answer of her's greatly supported and encouraged him. He next communicated his case to Mr. James Quarrell, pastor of the Independent church at Shrewsbury. Mr. Quarrell advised him to count the cost before he entered on a suffering state. He replied, that if he kept his living any longer, his conscience would fly in his face. He therefore immediately resigned it, and preached his farewell sermon from Luke xxiii. 3. Upon which the chancellor of the diocese sent him a citation, charging him with reflecting on the government of the church. He sent him for answer, that what he delivered was not to reflect upon, or cause disrespect to any, but to silence the cries of an awakened conscience. What personal estate he had, he discovered to his creditors, who took

all away. They who remained unsatisfied, put him in Shrewsbury jail, where he was often remarkably relieved by persons utterly unknown to him. His keeper's wife, who at first treated him harshly, was converted by his means. At last some friends, among whom was Mr. Orton, the grandfather of the celebrated Job Orton, engaged for the payment of his debts, and he was set at liberty. He afterwards lived for a considerable time at Shrewsbury. We are led to infer, from various circumstances, that he resigned his living at Church Stretton about the year 1666. About the close of the year 1672 he removed to Abergavenny, and was soon after chosen pastor of the church which usually met at Llanigon, near Hay, in Breconshire, and at Merthyr Tydvil, in Glamorganshire. The members of this church, who could not have been much under one thousand in number, were scattered over the whole county of Brecknock, and extensive districts of the adjoining counties of Monmouth, Glamorgan, Caermarthen, and Radnor. As the preaching stations, or the places where the different branches of the church used to meet, were from fifteen to twenty in number, the labours of the pastor, notwithstanding the assistance of three or four teaching elders, must have been enormous. Yet we are informed that his service was not confined to his own people. His capacious soul moved in a much larger sphere. From the time of his coming into these parts, as long as he was able, he spent his time in travelling all over *Wales*, where preaching the gospel of Christ in those dark parts was his daily work; and God blessed his endeavours to the conviction and conversion of many souls. The poor people travelled far to hear the Word, and attended it in vast numbers, with extraordinary earnestness. He endured many hardships from travelling in every kind of weather in those mountainous places, and being often but poorly accommodated, both in respect to diet and lodging. He constantly travelled to preach in different parts of Wales during his residence at Shrewsbury, as well as afterwards.

The following interesting account of his first visit to Breconshire—the principal scene of his future labours—has been preserved in his Diary :—

“August 5, 1672.—I rode away this day towards Brecknockshire, having a comfortable journey of it, in respect to the frame of my spirit, my company, and the weather. Blessed be the Lord. In the evening I came to Captain Watkins’, where I quickly discerned a sweet, gracious spirit in his wife; and much knowledge and good (I hope) in him. I prayed in the family, in Welsh, this night, with some freedom and refreshment. Mr. Hanmer, my fellow-traveller, prayed with me in secret, as we went to bed, and that very sweetly.

“August 6.—I prayed in private this morning, having much freedom and life in my spirit with some brokenness. Blessed be the Lord. In my second private duty this morning I was something dry in my spirit, yet earnest and encouraged in spirit. In the evening I prayed again in private, with some earnestness of spirit and refreshment. Blessed be the Lord. At night I sought the Lord in private, with my fellow-traveller, having enlargement of spirit in some measure. I found family duty neglected this night.

“August 7.—Mr. Hanmer prayed in private with me this morning very sweetly, so that I had much refreshment in joining with him. I prayed afterwards in private myself, having some encouragement and enlargement. Blessed be the Lord for ever. I went away from Captain Watkins’ to Gwernevet, from thence to Talgarth, where I preached and prayed with much freedom and enlargement from that text in Ezek. xvi. 6, and all in Welsh. The people seemed exceedingly affectionate and willing, inviting me earnestly to come again. Blessed be the Lord for ever. From hence I came back to Gwernevet, where I tarried all night. Here also I found family duty neglected, which something troubled me; I had a great deal of discourse with Mr. Charles Lloyd, about going to public.¹ This night I prayed in private with my fellow-traveller, having much enlargement, and some refreshment. Blessed be the Lord.

“August 8.—Brother Hanmer prayed in private, and I had some brokenness and refreshment in joining with him. I

¹ He evidently means going to public worship at the parish church, which some of the most moderate Nonconformists used to do; while others looked upon those who did it with disapprobation, and as temporizers.

prayed a little in private after, having little encouragement, yet some exercise of faith. I came away from Brecknockshire this morning towards Glasgwm (in Radnorshire), where I preached from Revelation iii. 20, having sweet enlargement of spirit in prayer and preaching. Oh, blessed for ever be my faithful and dear Lord. I came away hence this evening to brother Hanmer's house, where I prayed in the family with some freedom of spirit. I prayed afterwards in private, being exercised with temptations by Satan, yet had some encouragement and exercise of faith. Blessed be the Lord."

On the 2nd of July, 1672, he visited his friends and former parishioners at Stretton, which appears to be the first visit he paid them since he resigned his living there.

"I rode out towards Stretton this morning, having much distraction in my heart, till I resolved to meditate on the cross of Christ, and that something bettered my frame of spirit. When I came to widow Zanche's house, I was exceedingly refreshed to see so many of my old friends and neighbours there—yea, many of them that wretchedly reviled me when I quitted my place. I expected but a small company, but there were a very great number of people, considering the warning they had. I preached and prayed, having much freedom and enlargement, and several sensible approaches of God. Blessed be His name. The text was Luke xix. 42. The people seemed very much stirred and affected, and certainly there was much of God appearing in this meeting."

August 27, 1672.—He and his wife left Shrewsbury for Lley, in Caernarvonshire, their native place. He preached at different places on the way to crowded congregations, such as Gwnle, near Newtown, Llanbryn-mair, Machynlleth, and Bronycludwr.

On the 3rd of September they safely arrived at Pwllheli. The interesting character of the following account of this visit to his native country and relations, will be a sufficient apology for its length :—

"September 3.—In morning duty, I was earnest in spirit and much refreshed. We left Penmorfa, and had a prosperous journey to Pwllheli this day. Blessed for ever be the Lord.

I prayed in private at William Griffith's house, being something encouraged and refreshed. I taught this evening at W. Griffith's, from Rev. iii. 20, being much helped and refreshed in prayer and preaching. And I had some hope given me in prayer after, that the people received good; and there were many to hear. In my evening duty I was much refreshed and enlarged, God owning prayer in behalf of the people that had been hearing.

"September 4.—I prayed with my wife; being much refreshed and enlarged in spirit, I prayed in private again, having hope that God would be gracious to the people at Pwllheli, and I had much brokenness in this duty. I prayed in private again, being more dry than before. So also I prayed at Gwynfryn at night with my wife; having some encouragement and refreshment, I laboured something to call to mind the former evils committed by me, when I came to the several places where they were committed, but I was generally very confused in mind, and senseless of those evils in comparison of what I should have been.

"September 5.—I prayed in private with my wife, having much enlargement and refreshment; I prayed in private after at W. Griffith's, having much sweetness and encouragement. I met with a letter from my father at W. Griffith's, which did much trouble and discompose me, yet God came in with encouragement in time of need, having very little comfort or encouragement from without. We came to Nanhoron this evening, safely. We prayed in private there with some refreshment and encouragement. Blessed be the Lord.

"September 6.—We prayed together this morning in private with much brokenness and enlargement, having some hopes that God would visit some of my relations with saving mercy. When first I came to Methlan this day, I prayed in private, being very dry in spirit, yet earnest, and not altogether discouraged. Blessed be the Lord. I prayed after in private, in a secret place, in the night season, being tempted to fear, having little sense or encouragement. I prayed with my wife at night again, having earnestness and much refreshment. I was so blind and confused, most an end, that I was aware of a

great deal of senselessness and unaptness for many duties that lay incumbent upon me in this country; as my being very senseless at the remembrance of my former evils committed here, and my voidness of pity at heart at the observation of the sinful and miserable estate of my relations, and others in this country; so also I found that I was not affected upon the reflection my thoughts made upon the distinguishing grace of God, whereby he was pleased to reveal himself to my soul in mercy, and to rescue me from the like, or rather a worse condition than they are in. Oh, blessed be the Lord.

“September 7.—I prayed in private with my wife, and was very earnest and enlarged with some sense and refreshment. I had much discouragement of spirit in these parts, finding little or nothing of God appearing in any of these parts; I prayed in private again as I remember. I came to see cousin John Williams this day, and had discourse with him about his silence and sitting still all this while, but found little satisfaction in what answers he returned. I found much of the grace of God appearing in him, yet I plainly judged him to be under temptation, with reference to his non-preaching all this while.¹ I came in the evening towards Pwllheli, and when I came there I prayed in private, being very weary and dry in both duties of prayer and the weekly thanksgiving.

“September 8.—Being the Sabbath, I was very hard, yet earnest, in morning duty, and in renewing my covenant. I had some refreshment and cheerfulness, together with many temptations. I was afterwards exercised much with a temptation to fear trouble and imprisonment in that country, upon Richard Owen’s denying me the liberty of the public place that day, and some thoughts I had of going to it, notwithstanding, if the place had been open. I preached there, at William Griffith’s house this day, from Jeremiah xxx. 21, 22, having little enlargement in the morning, except it be in prayer. In the afternoon I had some more enlargement and freedom than in the morning. Blessed for ever be the Lord. I prayed in

¹ Mr. John Williams, as we have seen, was the only Nonconformist minister at that time in Caernarvonshire. He was a good man, but too timid to be of great service to the cause of religion in that persecuting age.

private after, without refreshment. I prayed in the family, being void of refreshment, and much tempted to hypocrisy, to speak to men, and not to God. I prayed again in private, having some refreshment.

“September 9.—In the morning duty I was tempted, yet earnest; and something refreshed, I prayed in private again, but very hard of heart, and with a spirit much estranged from God. I went to my brother’s house this day, and preached there from John xv. 13, having freedom of spirit in preaching and prayer. I prayed there at night with my wife, having little refreshment, but rather dry, yet something lively in spirit.

“September 10.—I prayed with my wife, being earnest, but tempted, yet somewhat sweetly refreshed in spirit. I had some jangling with my mother this day, which ended in peace. We called on sister Ellen, so went to Trygarn. I found myself much tempted in these parts basely to comply with the spirits of carnal men, and thereupon backward to speak of the things of God. I prayed in the wood there, having an ill savour upon my spirit, yet I was something recovered, and had some encouragement. I prayed in private after with my wife, having freedom and encouragement. Blessed be the Lord.

“September 11.—I prayed in private with my wife this morning, being something free from temptation, enlarged in spirit, yet hard and void of sense. I came to Gwynfryn thence, where I was prevented from seeking the Lord in the garden there. At night I came to the house of Maurice Jones’s widow; I found the Christians thereabouts very fearful, so that they came together very late in the night. I taught there from Cant. ii. 13, last words, with some measure of enlargement, especially in prayer. I found cousin Lowry Williams there, and have hope that she minds the best things. I prayed in private after, being much tempted to sleep, and having little sense in duty.

“September 12.—I prayed in private this morning, being tempted, hard, and much oppressed with many evils in my spirit. I prayed again in private, and had many strivings, yet earnest in spirit, and both enlarged and refreshed. I came to Pwllheli at night, where I met Hugh Evans, and was somewhat

refreshed. I prayed in the family, being exceedingly tempted to pride and hypocrisy, and had little sense of God.

“September 13.—I prayed in private this morning, with some enlargement and reviving. I was in a better frame of spirit all this day than I had been several days before. It being the fair-day at Pwllheli, I had occasion to speak with several, which I did with much alacrity, and this was kindness from the Lord in several respects. I prayed after in the evening, having some life and encouragement. So also I prayed in the family, being tempted as the night before. I had some refreshment in discoursing with Hugh Evans, at Richard Thomas’s house, this night. I prayed in private after, having little life or refreshment.

“September 14.—I prayed with my wife, being hard, earnest, and in conflict with my spirit, yet with some satisfaction, having some freedom to plead with God. So I prayed in private after, having atheism, hardness, discouragement, and no sense throughout the duty. I went to see cousin John Williams, being in an inward conflict by the way as I went. We discoursed together very earnestly and seriously about his long silence, and neglecting the Lord’s work in that country, inso-much that it drew tears from us both, as I imagined. He told me something of the sense that many in that country had, about my quitting my benefice, that it was done only out of some politic design. He told me also that I must walk very close and upright to recover my credit in that country. He pressed me much to hold forth Christ and his merits as the only justification of a sinner, and advised me to insist much upon that point wherever I went. I prayed in private in the evening, and proceeded to my weekly duty of thanksgiving, being hard, restrained, yet having some sense.

“September 15.—Being the Sabbath, I prayed with earnestness, yet hard, and without sense for the most part. I went away to the house of Maurice Jones’s widow, where I prayed, having a little refreshment; I preached there this day from 1 Peter iv. 18, having little encouragement or enlargement in prayer or preaching. In the afternoon I received a note from my brother, who was at Llanarmon, whither he invited me in

the afternoon to preach ; but coming there, the public place was shut against us by the priest there, so that I preached in the yard, from the same text as in the morning, having much restraint upon my spirit in praying and preaching, yet some of the people were seemingly affected. I rode away thence to Pwllheli this evening, where I prayed a little in private, having encouragement to hope that God would do good to some in that town ; I preached there this night from Romans v. 8, and I had much freedom in praying and preaching. Blessed be the Lord."

On the following day he took his leave of his relations and friends in Caernarvonshire, and returned to Shrewsbury, preaching at Cynfal, in Merionethshire, on his way. He often visited his native county after his settlement in South Wales, and was in fact the life of the Nonconforming interest there. It was through his influence that the people of Pwllheli and the neighbourhood got Mr. James Owen to settle amongst them for some time, and afterwards Mr. Daniel Phillips.

In his various journeys through the Principality, though like his divine Master only going about to do good, he constantly exposed himself to danger. He was often waylaid by his enemies, but was "hid in the hollow of God's hand." They once searched his house for him when he had been preaching ; but he was hid in a closet adjoining to the room where the meeting was held, and they could not find the door. Another time a constable came into the room where he was preaching, commanding him to desist ; when, with an undaunted courage, he charged him in the name of the great God, whose word he was preaching, to forbear molesting him, as he would answer it at the great day ! The man hereupon sat down and trembled, heard him patiently till he had done, and then departed. Mr. Maurice was taken but once, and then he was bailed ; and upon appearance discharged by the favour of some justices of the peace, who were his friends and relations.

He was sometimes reduced to great straits whilst he lived at Shrewsbury, but was often surprisingly relieved. One time, when he had been very thoughtful, and was at prayer with his family, suiting his petitions to their necessitous case, a carrier

knocked at the door, inquired for Mr. Maurice, and delivered to him a handful of money untold, as a present from some friends, but would not tell who they were. The same person also another time brought him a purse of money very seasonably, in a like necessity. His wife, who was the heiress of the Gwynfryn estate, near Pwllheli, then worth £40 a year, became entitled to it soon after his leaving Church Stretton; but it was unjustly alienated for ten years. However, she was cheerfully industrious in mean employments, and contented with the coarsest fare; being ambitious only, if possible, to have the sureties and obligations discharged; which, through the good providence of God, Mr. Maurice had the satisfaction of living to see, though he died soon after.

In the latter part of his life he manifested great humility, meekness, patience, and resignation to the Divine will, and much compassion to his enemies. Their reproaches, instead of discomposing him, did but furnish him with occasions to pity and pray for those that raised and spread them. His calmness under all his sufferings, whether from man, or from the immediate hand of God, was such that they did not lessen the serenity of his countenance. He had the mastery of himself in a high degree of perfection. His natural temper was quick, and (as he himself used to say) had a mixture of moroseness; but by grace he governed it as became a man, a Christian, and a minister. He was courteous and obliging to all, and full of compassion to the needy and distressed. He was a hearty and constant friend, affectionate in all relations, and a tender, but not a too indulgent, father.

He occasionally practised physic, and improved his opportunities for administering to his patients' spiritual cures. One remarkable instance was in the case of a gentleman's daughter, seven years of age, who was a cripple, whose father, though not a Nonconformist, sent for Mr. Maurice to attend her; by whose means, though her bodily disorder remained, she received a far greater benefit than the cure would have been, as she was in an extraordinary manner brought to remember her Creator and Redeemer. In his diary for June 13, 1672, we have the following entry:—"This morning a son of Widow Jones,

from Stretton, viz., the weaver, came to seek my advice about the trembling of the heart. I spoke something to him about his soul; and the poor boy called me aside, and told me that he had some strange thought possessing him that he was lost for ever; which very thing occasioned this palpitation of the heart. Upon his speaking, a brokenness of heart possessed me, that I was much affected at his discourse."

It was his ordinary custom, both at home and abroad, to expound the Scriptures mornings and evenings, which proved very useful. If he knew of any one person in a family or congregation, though but a child, that did not understand the language in which he was obliged to speak, it was his custom, whether in prayer, exposition, or sermon, to deliver a part in one language, and a part in the other; for he used to say, he would not have one soul lose the benefit of an ordinance. Such was the ardour of his desire to do good, that he would not pass a poor person or a child on the road without speaking to him about his soul. He writes, in his diary for June 1, 1672:—"I set forth for Bryngwyn this afternoon, and by providence fell in company and discourse by the way with a woman that lived in Westbury parish. I hope there was some special hand of God in it, and that the woman gropes in earnest after the best things." On the 17th of the same month he writes:—"I came to Mrs. King's (in Radnorshire) this afternoon. By the way, upon the hill, I met with a poor boy, bare-legged and bare-footed. I asked him some questions about God and his soul. The poor boy seemed very loth to part with me, and wept (as I imagined, and so did he that was with me) a great while after we had left him."

In his preaching he generally aimed at laying the foundation of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. In the first part of his sermons he usually opened some fundamental point of the gospel, and introduced practical things in the application. When he quoted Scripture he used to comment upon it, so as to show his hearers the sense, and how it proved the point in question. He was abundant in allusions and comparisons to explain the subjects he discussed. He preached doctrines in an experimental manner, and had a wonderful skill in unravel-

ling the very thoughts and inward workings of men's hearts, and was very particular and convincing, as well as affectionate, in his applications to the consciences of his hearers.

He was so assiduous in his work that he was advised by his friends to be more sparing of himself; but he used to answer, "When a man has loitered the best part of his day, and the evening draws on, he had need to double his strokes." Excessive labour at last so broke his constitution, that it hastened his end. His behaviour on the bed of sickness was answerable to the past conduct of his life. He discovered a deep sense of the Divine goodness to him and his. When his wife observed to him that he had had a wearisome night, he replied, "What if I have? *Job* had many wearisome nights." When he saw the people weeping about him, he said to her, "Dost thou observe the loving-kindness of the Lord to us, poor strangers, in raising us so many friends? The love of God in Christ is a great refreshment to my soul. Blessed be God, who has made thee and me partakers of the same grace!" He was far from an apprehension of merit, and yet rejoiced in the testimony of his conscience. "There is nothing I have to trust to," says he, "as to my work and labour, and yet I shall have joy of that too." He died July 30, 1682, when he must have been between forty-five and fifty years of age. Mrs. Maurice, after his death, removed from Brecknockshire to her own estate at Pwllheli, and was afterwards married to Mr. Daniel Phillips, pastor of the Independent church in that town.

Mr. Maurice's remarkable catholicity of spirit, and his intimacy with the Antipædobaptists, many of whom were members of his church, have led some to suppose that he was himself of that persuasion; but his diary furnishes abundant proofs to the contrary. Giving an account of some person who had been sorely tempted by Satan, he, somewhat unlike himself, says that Satan tempted her to be *re-baptized* and join the Arminians, referring undoubtedly to Mr. Henry Gregory's people in Radnorshire, who were both Antipædobaptists and Arminians.*

* Calamy, vol. ii. 567-72. Mr. Maurice's MS. is a small volume, containing a Diary for six months of the year 1672, with a few pages of Notes and Remarks on different religious subjects.

STEPHEN HUGHES.

This excellent man was born in the town of Caermarthen in the year 1622 or 1623, or possibly a year or two earlier. Owing to the culpable neglect of his surviving contemporaries, no account whatever has been preserved of his education, conversion, and the commencement of his ministry. It is said that he was inducted to the living of Meidrym, in his native county, in the year 1645; and we infer also, from an allusion in his poem prefixed to the "Welshman's Candle," that he served the parish of Merthyr, in the same county, for some time. It would appear, from the fact of his being connived at in preaching occasionally in the parish churches after the Restoration, that he was episcopally ordained. He did not confine his labours to his own parishes, but traversed the length and breadth of the county to preach the 'gospel. We find, in the records of some of the oldest Nonconforming churches in Caermarthenshire, that he had several small societies or churches under his care, in different and distant parts of the county, as early as the year 1650.

In 1662 he was ejected from his living, and some time after married a pious woman at Swansea, whose portion, frugality, and industry contributed very much to his comfortable subsistence and future usefulness. After taking up his residence at Swansea, he continued, as before, to itinerate through the county of Caermarthen, to water the churches which he had already planted there, and plant new ones. Such were the extent and success of his labours in that county, that he was very properly called "The Apostle of Caermarthenshire." The ancient churches at Llanedi, Capel Isaac, Pencadair, Pantteg, Caermarthen, Llanybree, Henllan, and Trelech, were all gathered by him, and most of them formed into distinct churches in his time. Almost all the Congregational churches in that county, which at present amount to nearly one hundred, are off-shoots from these ancient stocks. One or two of the original Congregational churches in Cardiganshire also trace their origin to his labours; and most, if not all, the founders of the Antipædobaptist interest in those parts were seceders from his churches.

He was a plain, methodical, and affectionate preacher. He seldom preached without melting into tears, which often drew tears from his auditors. The matter of his preaching was thoroughly evangelical, though it does not appear that he was quite so high in his Calvinism as some of his contemporaries. His moderation and lively manner recommended him to the esteem of the sober part of the gentry, by whose connivance he often preached in the parish churches, which were always much thronged with hearers from the neighbouring parishes. He generally preached twice every Lord's day in distant places, and often rode eight or ten miles between the sermons. He often used, in a very striking manner, to expose the sinful and dangerous nature of ignorance, and to represent the usefulness, amiableness, and necessity of knowledge. He used upon all occasions to speak to the people with great freedom about their souls, even those whom he occasionally met with. When several persons were present, he would apply himself to each particularly; and when he saw them again, would ask them what they remembered of what he spoke last to them. He had very encouraging seals to his ministry, in the great numbers who were reclaimed by it from their sinful ways, and became serious Christians. Several most striking conversions were effected through his instrumentality. Once, when preaching at Wernchwith, a farm-house in the parish of Llanon, where Llanedi church then usually met, Mr. David Penry, son of a gentleman of the parish of Llanedi, came in after he had announced his text. Mr. Penry was a tall young man, of a gentlemanly appearance, and was educated with a view of taking orders in the Established Church. Being a stranger to Mr. Hughes, he at once thought, when he saw him coming in, that he was an officer coming with a warrant to take him prisoner. His mind was consequently greatly disturbed. However, he proceeded with his sermon. At the close of the service the young man pressed through the crowd towards the preacher, and took hold of his hand. "I hope, sir," said Mr. Hughes, "that you are not come to take me!" "No, my dear sir," replied Mr. Penry, bursting into tears, "but you have taken me." From that day

he gave up all thoughts of entering the ministry in the Establishment, and joined Mr. Hughes's people there. He was soon after called into the ministry, and presided over that congregation for above thirty years. At another time, being Easter Monday, as he was going to preach at the cave of Cwmhwplin, near Llandyssil, where the congregation of Pencadair used then to meet, he saw a number of people dancing on a field near Pant y Blawd, in the parish of Llanegwad. He stopped his horse, and after looking at them for some time called their leader, and told him—"If you will accompany me over the mountain, you shall have a better amusement than you can get here." The man consented, and followed him to the cave, where a large congregation had assembled. He was astonished to see such a number of people at such a place. Mr. Hughes immediately proceeded with the service, and the truth had such an effect on the man's mind, that he became a decidedly religious character and an eminent Christian from that day.

He was a great encourager of young ministers. Several of the most popular and useful ministers in Wales, in the latter part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, began their public life under his auspices. Having so many congregations under his pastoral care, he had ample opportunities to send out as many promising young men as he could find, to exercise their gifts. The young ministers of that age were laid under lasting obligations to him and his friend, Mr. Samuel Jones, of Brynllwarch. While the one made them scholars, the other made them preachers. The celebrated Mr. James Owen of Shrewsbury, Mr. William Evans of Caermarthen, Mr. Daniel Phillips of Pwllheli, Mr. Owen Davies of Henllan, Mr. David Penry of Llanedi, and many others, who became the pillars of Welsh Nonconformity after the removal of the ejected ministers from the stage, were all more or less indebted to him for their introduction to the work of the Christian ministry. Twelve young men, most of whom were brought up under his fatherly care, were ordained in the year of his death.

Having already given some account of his sufferings on account of his Nonconformity, and his unceasing efforts to diffuse religious knowledge among his countrymen by means of

the press, we have only to add, that he published in all about twenty books in the Welsh language, and several editions of some of them. At the end of most of those books he added the Welsh alphabet, to direct people to read. He pressed heads of families to teach their children and servants to read, and one neighbour to teach another ; and he actually engaged many to learn to read at forty and fifty years of age, and upwards. The amount of good which he has been the means of effecting in different ways is incalculable, and known only to Him whose knowledge is infinite. The amiableness of his disposition, his moderation as a Nonconformist, and the disinterestedness of his labours, induced some moderate Conformists, both clergy and laity, to contribute in aid of his benevolent schemes, especially his editions of the sacred Scriptures.

His constant and varied labours at length impaired his health, and probably shortened his days. He frequently expressed great concern lest on his death-bed he should fail in his intellects, so as to speak anything dishonourable to religion ; and often prayed—"Lord, remember us in our dying extremities, and leave us not to ourselves, to dishonour Thee in our last minutes." It pleased God to hear his prayers ; for he finished his course with great composure of mind and inward peace, in the year 1688, aged about sixty-five years. Having set his house in order, given directions about the church of which he was pastor, and committed his family to God, he turned his face towards the wall, and immediately expired. He was buried at St. John's, Swansea. No monument has been erected on the spot where his remains were deposited, but a hundred flourishing congregations in the county of Caermarthen, which are the fruits of his labours, are a more lasting and honourable monument to him than any work of art.*

PEREGRINE PHILLIPS.

He was born at Amroth, in the county of Pembroke, in the year 1623. His father was the vicar of that parish, and is described as a good old Puritan, who suffered for not reading the "Book of Sports." He had his education first at the public

* Calamy, vol. ii. pp. 718—20. Peter, Hanes Crefydd, p. 578.

school at Haverfordwest, next under Sir Edward Harley's chaplain at Brampton Bryan, in Herefordshire, and lastly under Dr. W. Thomas, afterwards Bishop of St. David's; from him he went to Oxford, where he continued till he was forced away by the civil war. He first officiated in the church as curate to his uncle, Dr. Collins, minister of Kidwelly, in Caermarthenshire, from whence he removed to the living of Llangwm, near Haverfordwest, which he enjoyed several years. Some gentlemen of the county, taking notice of his abilities, were for advancing him to a place more equal to his merits. Accordingly Sir Hugh Owen, Bart., Sir Roger Lort, Bart., and Sir John Meyrick, preferred him to Monkton, near Pembroke, and afterwards to St. Mary's in that town, and also to Cocheston. He preached three times every Lord's day, once in each of his churches, and did much good. He was reputed the best preacher in those parts; so that when Oliver Cromwell was at Pembroke, in 1648, he requested him to preach at one of his churches, before the officers of his army; which he did, with general approbation, and was afterwards much favoured by him. A number of men-of-war lying at Milford, designed for the reduction of Ireland, Cromwell got him on board, to pray in each of the ships before they sailed. He afterwards, as occasion offered, preached in almost every church in the county, both in Welsh and English; and also before the judges at the assizes at Cardigan, Caermarthen, and Haverfordwest.

During the siege of Pembroke, Mr. Phillips was much exposed to the dangers then incident to its inhabitants, as he probably resided at Monkton, just below the castle. While he continued labouring among his people, he sometimes had the balls flying about him; but he was most wonderfully preserved. Many of these balls were of cast-iron, several of them having been preserved by his descendants, and may now be seen at Haverfordwest. While these messengers of destruction were falling on his premises, Mr. Phillips is reported to have had a female servant who was courageous enough to go and milk the cow every day, partly for the sake of his children; and it has been said that neither cow, maid, nor family received the slightest injury. A story is also related of their being

straitened for food, and of flour having been concealed from the soldiers in a bolster, which occupied its usual place on the bed. On this flour, in addition to the milk, the children are believed to have subsisted in a time of scarcity.

Mr. Phillips was a member of the committee appointed to inquire into the conduct of ministers, and their qualifications for the sacred office. Through his influence and moderation, many persons were permitted to keep their livings who were not in every respect approved of by the ruling party. This kindness, which he, and several of his Nonconforming brethren, showed to the Episcopalians, was not in the least returned when that party regained their power. Many moderate Episcopalians were permitted during the interregnum to hold livings, but *there is not a single instance* of a Nonconformist being permitted to retain a living after August 24, 1662.

When Mr. Phillips was ejected from his livings he retired to a farm, called Dredgeman Hill, near Haverfordwest, which he held under Sir Herbert Perrot, who was his great friend in most of the troubles he afterwards met with. This gentleman was a descendant of the famous Sir John Perrot, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Soon after settling at Dredgeman Hill, he fitted up the best part of his house as a place of worship, for which, as we have already seen, he was repeatedly fined and imprisoned. On the 4th of March, 1668, he formed a church in his own house. When King James granted indulgence to the Nonconformists in 1687, a place was fitted up in the town of Haverfordwest for religious service. He used to preach every Lord's day at Dredgeman Hill in the morning, and in the town in the evening. When liberty was secured by the *Act of Toleration*, a meeting-house was erected in the town. This place of worship was recorded, according to the Act, at the Quarter Sessions, on the 17th of January, 1691. The excellent pastor died on the 17th of September following, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. His remains were interred in Haroldston church, if traditional information be correct. He continued his public services to the last, and preached twice the very Lord's day before his death. The church, at his decease,

consisted of sixty members. It soon increased under the ministry of his successor, Mr. Thomas Davies, and branches of it were formed into distinct churches at Pembroke, and Trefgarn, near St David's, early in the eighteenth century.

Mr. Phillips is described as a gracious and laborious servant of Jesus Christ, and useful to his whole neighbourhood. Being a person of the most amiable disposition, he took no small pleasure in reconciling differences between neighbours. Most of his descendants have been eminently religious from generation to generation, to the present day.

A few years before his death he met with a very remarkable deliverance, which deserves to be recorded. As he was riding homeward, late at night, over a place near Freystrup, in which there were a great many coal-pits, he and his horse fell into one of them, which was very deep and half full of water; the mouth of the pit being narrower, about six yards deep, than at the top, the horse there stuck fast, with his rider upon him. An old woman who was deaf providentially travelling with her grandchild that way, the child heard a great noise, and with much difficulty persuaded the woman to go out of her road to find the cause of it. At last, coming to the mouth of the pit, she found Mr. Phillips's situation, and immediately went to Captain Longman's, the proprietor, who had been his intimate friend for many years, and he presently brought proper assistance, and got him up without any considerable injury.

Mr. Phillips, though a very moderate, was still a most firm Nonconformist. Soon after his ejection, a disputation between him and Dr. Reynolds, about the ceremonies and the discipline of the Church, took place at Caermarthen, and another between him and his old tutor, Bishop Thomas, which was afterwards printed by the Bishop, contrary to Mr. Phillips's design, and without his knowledge.¹

WILLIAM JONES.

Nothing is known of the early history of this good man; he was inducted to the living of Kilmaenllwyd, Caermarthenshire,

¹ Calamy, vol. ii. 717; vol. iv. pp. 841-4. "Christian Witness" for 1850, pp. 66-70.

in the year 1655, and was ejected from it in 1662, if not before. Some time after his ejection he was taken up, and imprisoned at Caermarthen Castle, for holding conventicles, and preaching therein. He was kept there in close confinement for three or four years. During his imprisonment he changed his views on baptism, and on his liberation he went as far as the valley of Olchon, on the borders of Herefordshire, where a branch of the Antipædobaptist church at Llanwenarth, near Abergavenny, used to meet, and was there baptized by immersion. Having returned to his friends in Caermarthen-shire, he found among them eleven persons willing to adopt his views. These he baptized in the month of August, 1667; from that time to July 12, 1668, twenty-one more were added to them. On that day Mr. William Prichard and Mr. Thomas Watkins, the pastor and deacon of the church at Llanwenarth, Olchon, and the Hay, attended as a deputation from their people, to form these newly-baptized persons into a regular strict communion church, and to lay hands upon them; for imposition of hands on the baptized was then considered by the strict party of the Antipædobaptists as a religious ceremony of great importance. This was the beginning of the Antipædobaptist interest in the western part of South Wales. Soon after the formation of this church, Mr. Thomas David Rees, a distinguished member of one of Mr. Stephen Hughes's churches, together with several of his friends, left Mr. Hughes's communion, on account of their disagreement with his practice of occasional conformity, and joined Mr. William Jones's people. Mr. Jones's party continued to increase during all the heat of persecution. The number of the members in 1689 was one hundred and thirteen, and Mr. Jones was then assisted by no less than ten preachers, some of whom were considered as his colleagues in the ministry. In course of time, branches of this mother church were formed into distinct churches in different localities of the counties of Caermarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan. The members of the original church, and its various branches, in 1777, amounted to seventeen hundred and sixty-seven.

The exact time of Mr. Jones's death is unknown. He

attended the Association, held in London in the year 1689, and that is the last account we have of him; but it is supposed that he lived for some years after that date.

It is said that he was a very comely person, most gentlemanly in his behaviour, amiable in his temper, and always careful not to give any one a just cause of offence. Previous to his sufferings, he was of a somewhat timid and nervous temperament, but after passing through the ordeal of persecution he became more courageous, firm, and bold.

He was highly respected by the gentry generally. One gentleman pressed him very hard to conform, tempting him with the offer of a living worth £140 a year—a very considerable sum at that time in Wales. That offer he respectfully rejected, preferring to live with a clear conscience in poverty and persecution. As an instance of the esteem in which he was held by the upper class, it is recorded that being once taken from a meeting in Pembrokeshire to the prison in Haverfordwest, the gentry in and about the town paid him such marks of respect on his way to the prison, as quite mortified his officious persecutors. Having previously engaged to preach in a distant locality, he felt a strong desire to fulfil his engagement. An influential gentleman giving his word for his speedy return to the prison, the keeper permitted him to go. The gentleman lent him his horse and top coat. When he reached the place, a large congregation was waiting for him, and on his making them acquainted with his circumstances, they were filled with a strange mixture of joy and sadness. After preaching, he returned to the prison.¹

SAMUEL JONES, A.M.

Samuel Jones was, in many respects, the most eminent of all the Welsh Nonconformist ministers of the seventeenth century. He was the son of John Roberts,² of Corwen, in

¹ Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," part ii. p. 237. "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 325-41.

² It may appear strange to English readers that the son of John *Roberts* should be called Samuel *Jones*, but it was then a very prevalent custom in Wales for the son to take the father's Christian name as his own surname. In this case *John* was changed into *Jones*.

Merionethshire, but his father, at the time of his birth, in 1628, resided near Chirk Castle, in Denbighshire. He matriculated at All Souls' College, Oxford, on the 11th of March, 1647, but he afterwards removed to Jesus College, where he became a fellow and a tutor. He received Presbyterian ordination at Taunton, and was inducted to the living of Llangynwyd, near Bridgend, Glamorganshire, some time before the Restoration, from which he was ejected in 1662. His first wife was Mary, the daughter of Rees Powell, Esq., of Maesteg, in the parish of Llangynwyd, by whom he had fourteen children, but most of them died in their infancy, and the mother herself died in giving birth to her fourteenth child, July 23, 1676, in the 38th year of her age. The following epitaph, evidently the composition of her affectionate husband, is still to be seen on her tombstone in Llangynwyd churchyard :—

"A loving wife, and mother dear,
Asleep in Christ, is lodged here :
Reader, repent, thy minutes fly,
Redeem thy time, and learn to die ;
Now make thy peace in Christ alone,
Slight not the counsel of a stone."

Mr. Jones was married the second time on the 14th of August, 1677, to Mrs. Mary David, of St. Lythians, near Cardiff. It does not appear that he had children by his second wife.

Maria, his eldest daughter, was married at Swansea, August 15, 1687, to Mr. David Jones, of the parish of Llangollen, one of her father's pupils. This young man is described as the son of a freeholder, and "an old disciple." About the time of his marriage he succeeded Mr. Titus Thomas in the pastorate of the Independent church at Shrewsbury, where he died, greatly lamented by an attached flock, in the year 1718. His son, Mr. Joshua Jones, was for many years pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Manchester.

Brynlwarch, a respectable farmhouse in the parish of Llangynwyd, appears to have been Mr. Samuel Jones's residence, from the time of his marriage with his first wife to the close of his life. That farm was probably a part of his father-in-law's estate.

Mr. Jones was, for many years before his death, severely afflicted by that general complaint of hard students in that age—the stone in the bladder. Tormenting paroxysms of it generally seized him once a fortnight, and continued for some days. He usually went on in his ministerial service, though his pains often extorted tears and groans, which occasioned frequent and affecting pause in his sermons. His patience was exemplary under all his bodily pains. He died in the 70th year of his age, September 7th, 1697, and was buried on the 10th of the same month at Llangynwyd. The inscription on his tombstone is long since worn off, and no one seems to have taken such interest in it as to copy it when legible.

Having already had occasion to give some account of his sufferings for Nonconformity, and as his eminence as a scholar and tutor will come again under our notice in the chapter on the Welsh colleges, we need only refer in this place to his character as a man, a Christian, and a Nonconformist. His contemporaries describe him as a Christian of the primitive stamp, always meek, humble, loving, and peaceable. His conversation had a sweet air of gravity and pleasantness. He was a man of uncommon prudence in his conduct, by which he gained such an esteem among the gentry that many of them put their sons under his tuition. Lord Mansel spent several years in his family.

In the year 1665 he was pressed hard by Dr. Davies, Archdeacon of Llandaff, and by the Bishop of the diocese, to accept of a living which they then offered him. He consequently drew up the following queries, which he desired them to answer before he could accept of their kind offer:—

“About the Declaration in the Act.

“1. Whether any book whatsoever, besides that which is penned by an infallible Spirit, both as to matter and expression, can justly lay claim to an *unfeigned assent* of the understanding, and *consent* of the will, to all and every thing contained in it? Whether the contrary judgments of many conscientious and learned men, touching the particular books mentioned in the declaration, and their confident reasonings (formerly and of late)

for it, and against it, be not a clear evidence that there is at least some ground of hesitation, for men inferior in grace and gifts, concerning the controverted particulars, unto which their *unfeigned assent* is required.

“2. Whether it be not damnable hypocrisy in a man to declare his *unfeigned assent* to all and every thing contained in these or any other books, if but some propositions in them seem to him dubious?

“3. Whether the Liturgy, &c., contain not some propositions in themselves so dubious, at least as may obstruct the assent required;—as that article *Filioq.*, in Athanasius’s Creed, excluding the Greek churches from the possibility of salvation? The passages in the rubric at the close of Public Baptism concerning the *undoubted salvation* of all infants baptized, dying before actual sin; the *sure and certain hope of the salvation* of every individual person buried by the Liturgy; seeming contradiction in the translation of the Psalms, as Psa. cv. 28. Compare the Liturgy Psalter and the Bible.

“Queries about Ceremonies imposed.

“1. Whether by the comprehensive obligation of the Second Commandment, as also by the severe interdictions of adding, altering, or diminishing in the matter of God’s worship (expositive of the said Commandment), all instituted modes of man’s invention in Divine worship be not prohibited, leaving to man only the due regulation of natural circumstances relating to decency or order, which are common both to civil and religious performances, and attend their nature as they are *actions*, and not as they are *religious* actions?

“2. Whether ceremonies ordained by man to teach, by a special signification put upon them, become not purely religious, and being annexed as necessary conditions to God’s worship, become not part of that worship; I mean not of moral worship, but of instituted ceremonial or accidental worship, as the tabernacle, temple, altar, feasts, priests, and vestments under the law, were part of the Levitical service?

“3. Seeing the edification of the body of Christ is professedly the end endeavoured after by these impositions (for to this must

order, decency, and uniformity be subordinated), whether it be derogatory to the wisdom, care, and faithfulness of our blessed Saviour, the great King of his Church, that any means should be used with religious observance for that end, for which himself, in his perfect law left with us, hath made sufficient provision? And whether the lamentable consequences of those attempts, which even wise men have made in several ages of the Church, to compass that end by means of their own institution, do not speak the want of aptness and efficacy in those expedients to attain their ends? God giveth a promise and a blessing to his own institutions; we can neither to ours.

“4. Whether after submission to the practice of the present ceremonies, a man may conscientiously scruple the use of any other ceremonies of the Church of Rome (if required), seeing the same general ground and end is acknowledged to all; and that many of them seem less offensive, because not so grossly abused, as some of ours already complied with?

“Queries about Re-ordination.

“1. Whether a man having, through Divine indulgence, some comfortable testimony upon his own heart, and some seals of his mission upon the hearts of others, that he is a true, though the meanest, minister of Christ, ought to do anything that may interpretatively amount to the denial of his ministry?

“2. Whether it consists with the honour of Christ, and the dignity of His ordinances, and with charity to the souls of men, that a minister, satisfied about his inward and outward call, should purchase his liberty to exercise his ministry at one time, by invalidating, as much as in him lieth, his ministerial administrations at another time; and consequently by ensnaring the consciences of men, concerned in those administrations?

“3. Whether it be not a novel practice, tending to the dishonour of the gospel, and the ministry of it in general, to renounce an ordination accounted valid and lawful, by the practice of most, and, I suppose, in the judgment of all Protestant churches, particularly the Church of England, attested by Archbishop Bancroft at the instalment of a Scotch bishop, ordained minister only by the Presbytery?

“Queries about Scandal.”

“1. Whether the negative precepts which bind *ad semper*, which do prohibit scandal, the heinous descriptions of the nature of it amounting to soul-murder, the dreadful woe denounced against him that offendeth but one, and that a little one too; together with the exemplary care and tenderness of the apostle in the case, ought not to make every sincere Christian very cautious and circumspect in this point?

“2. Whether the injunction of the magistrate can secure the conscience from guilt in a practice that it is known antecedently will prove scandalous, and inductive of sin to many, *ex conditione operis*?

“3. Whether the contempt of the ministry, and ministers of the gospel, the scorn cast upon their persons, office, and function, the irreligion, libertinism, and atheism, that is seen in this sinful generation, hath not its rise, at least some improvement, from this root of scandal—ministerial scandal—yea in this very kind also, now inquired into?

“4. Seeing the least evil of sin is not knowingly to be done to avoid the greatest evil of suffering, or to compass the greatest good thereby; whether a minister forcing himself against his light, in all or any of these or the like particulars, God may not justly blast his endeavours, and follow him with terrors of conscience to his grave? As by obvious instances, within late experience, it is almost demonstrably apparent.”¹

If the Bishop and the Archdeacon attempted to answer these queries, their answers did not satisfy the enlightened and

¹ The case is exactly the same in the present day. We have before our mind several instances of ministers who were popular and useful amongst the different Nonconforming denominations, but by submitting to be re-ordained by a bishop, and so professing in effect that their former ministrations as Dissenting ministers were nothing but profane mockery, they lost the confidence of the community, and God seems to be blasting all their labours, so that many of them have scarcely one person attending their ministry for every hundred they had before. There are in Wales many Episcopal ministers, whose pious efforts to do good are evidently attended by the blessing of God; but of all the Dissenting ministers who have conformed within the last fifty years, we know not of a single individual whose ministry appears to be the means of advancing even the interests of the Established Church, as a denomination, much less the interests of our common Christianity.

tender conscience of Samuel Jones, for he lived and died without accepting their offer.

In the year 1680 Mr. Jones wrote the following letter and the accompanying queries, "to satisfy a godly minister who would not conform as minister, but was free to attend the Common Prayer in his lay capacity, and did ordinarily go to church ; but when he was severely urged to come to the Lord's table among his neighbours, he then scrupled that point of conformity : but nevertheless, being under the power of fear, he was strongly inclined to go to the Sacrament also, and thereupon sent me his arguments that induced him to it, which I according to my weakness answered, and with my answer sent him five or six queries, which God was pleased to bless for his establishment : "

"DEAR BROTHER,—I am sorry that I mislaid the letter upon the first receipt thereof, though at length I found it ; but more sorry to find you unresolved in such a season, when all good men should be at rest in their own minds, to welcome patiently and cheerfully that part of the Cross of Christ which their Heavenly Father shall allot them in this day of Jacob's trouble. I impute this hesitation to a conscientious tenderness, and partly also to your being alone. I also fear, that in the hour of temptation, and power of darkness, many of God's faithful servants may find themselves something more exposed to the violence of the approaching storm, for their former easy compliances, slavish fear, and hearts not fully mortified to the world. I cannot believe but that your own reflections have ere this satisfied you, beyond anything you can expect of me. And as no stability is more impregnable than that which is attained after doubtings, so scruples are never better answered than when God enables us to answer them ourselves, by a due attendance upon the Word and prayer ; and oftentimes the same mould that cast up the venomous plant yields also an effectual antidote. I know what satisfies one Christian in a dubious case may not satisfy another ; and what may satisfy every godly man may not satisfy an adversary inflamed with fiery zeal. Neither indeed is it fit that those reasons that

most satisfy us should be cast before some, lest they turn again, and trample them and tear us. It is more to answer your expectation, than to offer you, in so large an argument, distinct solutions, that I have, in a great hurry of business, scribbled the enclosed lines: wherein, if there be nothing worthy of your observation, yet there is something from whence you may conclude my friendship. I humbly commend you to the special conduct of God's Spirit, who is promised to lead us into all truth, and distinctly to point out duty to us, enable us for it, and comfort us under all the discouragements that may befall us in the discharge of it.

"I am, yours in the best bonds, S. J.

"Inquiries.

"1. Whether it appears not, upon evident grounds, that there is a visible deflection, and a dreadful spirit of degeneracy found among us, as to the purity of the gospel in its doctrine, its simplicity in worship, and its sanctity in conversation? And if so, whether it concerns not God's people to be very cautious how they strike in with a declining church state, especially after they have been engaged in their places to promote and further a reformation, and found the presence of God with them in their sincere endeavours?

"2. Whether the Lord seems not in this our day to appear with His fan in His hand, and, by some discriminating trial, to proceed to purge His threshing-floor? And if so, whether the *Shibboleth* now insisted on be not evident, and seems not as clear to discerning Protestants in this age, considering the different measures of light, as the points wherein the glorious witnesses of Christ were tried by in the preceding ages?

"3. Whether the Liturgy and ceremonies have not in their matter and form—not to mention their original and effects—that tincture that hath made them justly loathsome and disgusting formerly to many whose senses were exercised to discern good and evil; in so much that they quitted their native country rather than they would comply with them? And if so, whether now it would be safe to embrace them, when they are clearly removed from their first and former

station, and forcibly imposed and implied as an engine to promote designs of a more ominous tendency, and contrary to the end of their first introduction?

“4. Whether such as have, according to their consciences, endeavoured a reformation by their sufferings now for twenty years, and discovered their dissatisfaction in their present impositions, ought now, upon the appearance of persecution, to start aside, and to trample deliberately under their feet their own testimony, in conjunction with the judgment and practice of their brethren in the present and past generations? If compliance with the matters imposed be a duty, why was it not sooner practised? If not, why is it now? Are penal statutes such effectual means to satisfy conscience?

“5. Whether Quakers, Papists, and the corrupter sort of the Episcopal clergy, during their late sufferings, may not rise up in judgment against such as are of sounder principles, and yet of such slippery and inconstant practices that the Atheists of this age cry out, ‘We know not where to find, nor what to make of them. And for all their pretence to conscience, yet it is a mere tool that they can manage this or that way, as the wind fits best for their interests, and to save their stakes’?

“6. Whether the required compliance administers not just matter of scandal:—(1) by way of grief to the strong; (2) by way of humbling to the weak; (3) by way of hardening to the profane; and (4) by exasperating magistrates to sharper methods of severity against others that do not comply, and dare not, under a pretence of worshipping God, perform only a duty of civil obedience to the law, to avoid its penalty?

“7. Whether it be not the duty, wisdom, and strength of the people of God in the present juncture to stand still, and patiently to bear the cross of Christ, especially considering, that the same reasons that are now urged for their submission to the present impositions, as the power of the magistrate in the things of God, the peace of the Church, examples of learned men, long prescriptions, the nature of indifferences, &c., may not lead them to future and further compliances, as the use of cream, spittle, holy water, &c., which upon the same grounds may be enforced upon them?”

A short time before his decease, a report was spread that Mr. Jones had renounced his Nonconformity. A friend wrote to him to ascertain whether that report was true or not, to whom he returned the following reply :—

“SIR,—I was a little surprised by your last letter, and cannot but wonder that such lying reports, which your paper mentions, should gain any credit, especially among such as have known my person, profession, and practice for forty years together. But the father of lies is not yet dead, though one might imagine his ammunition is far spent, when he makes use of such little tricks or ridiculous artifices to promote his designs. I account it a mercy that the only wise God hath thus long, beyond all expectation, lengthened out my dying life, that I might vindicate not so much my own little name, as the great name of the holy and blessed God, and His good ways, wherein myself and Christian friends have walked with peace and concord, notwithstanding all the reproaches and sufferings we meet with.

“That I was formerly visited in my sickness by Mr. David Thomas, then minister at Margam, and my very intimate friend, is a truth ; but that he questioned me about Nonconformity, and that I should declare unto him my repentance for it, with a promise that if God did restore my health, that I would act for the Church of England, as much as before I had acted against it, is a gross and impudent falsehood. I declare unto you and to all the world, as in the words of a dying man, that though I had then, and have still, many and great sins to bewail before God, yet I had not then, and have not since, the least check from my own conscience for my noncompliance and submission to those impositions, that were then made the indispensable terms of communion with the Church of England. I confess that I had then, and have still, a very honourable respect for the able and conscientious ministers of the Church of England, and do profess an agreement with all that are sound in their faith, and holy in their life and conversation ; but to declare an *unfeigned assent and consent* to all and everything contained in the books mentioned in the Act of Uniformity ; to deny my former ordination, which I judged valid by Scripture,

and the general practice of all the reformed churches ; to swallow several oaths ; and to crouch under the burden of the other impositions, which need not be named, were such blocks that the law had laid at the Church door, that, upon mature consideration, I could not, durst not then, and dare not now leap over, though to save my credit and livelihood, though to gain a dignity or preferment, without odious hypocrisy, and the overthrowing of my inward peace, which is and ought to be dearer to me than my very life. To this choice I was then led, not by the examples of other leading men, nor with any design that others should be led by me. This is the living testimony of,

“Sir, your dying friend, S. J.

“Brynnlwarch, Feb. 16, 1696.”

Notwithstanding his firmness as a Nonconformist, Mr. Jones was held in the highest esteem by every Conformist capable of appreciating his worth. Some of the most rigid Churchmen were on very intimate terms with him. The following letter, preserved among the Ayscough MSS. in the British Museum, and already published in the “Christian Reformer” for 1834, and Stoughton’s “Spiritual Heroes,” shows that even Dr. Robert South, a Churchman notorious for his bigotry, felt bound to respect Samuel Jones :—

“March 12th, 1688.

“*Most dear and honoured Friend*,—If I could be ashamed to be overcome by you in anything, it should be to be thus overcome in kindness, and having received from you so much, to have returned so little. Your love has still the advantage of prevention, the sure effect of great activity ; so that all I can express can reach no farther than gratitude, which, at the best, is but return in imitation—mean things compared with what they can but write after.

“Dear Sir,—You speak of my sealing your pardon ; but your love, I am sure, is the object of another thing, unless that saying should take place—that favours themselves are scarce pardoned when they cannot be recompensed. I most heartily confess, that I find that stronger reality of affection in you, and

that upon no ground on my part, but what entirely your own sweet disposition and inclination creates to itself, that I am amazed at what I see and find, having elsewhere seen and found so much to the contrary.

"I have my present abode at Westminster; but God knows, I look not on that or any place else almost as my abode, while I see the whole nation so unsettled. I can say as you do, that (thanks be to God) I enjoy my health, and in externals want nothing but faithful and suitable converse; for there may be want of that where there is none of company. And were you disengaged, as I am, I could even beg of you to come and live with me, for I know none but yourself and one more, who also is planted afar off, with many little ones about him, who, both in respect of learning and affection, could sweeten my life, and promote my studies. But afar off as you are, you are like now and then to be troubled with me, having the convenience of writing to you. Our friend, Dr. Lloyd, I suppose you know, is married, and, in my judgment, very happily. He is an honest and ingenious person, and I doubt not God has a blessing in store for him. Dear Sir,—I cannot but thank you for all your love, and that He would requite it to you and yours who alone can. I am, I can assure you,

"Your ever faithful and affectionate friend,

"ROBERT SOUTH.

*"For the Rev. and his honoured friend, Mr. Samuel Jones,
at Goitrehen, in Glamorganshire, South Wales, these."*

Samuel Jones was a celebrated poet. Several of his compositions are preserved in a volume of Welsh poetry, entitled *Cyfrinach y Beirdd*, and they are all worthy of his piety, learning, and refined taste. He probably composed many pieces in the English language, but the following, on his recovery from a severe illness, is the only one we have met with. Though in point of poetical merit it is not to be compared with his Welsh compositions, yet its devotional tone cannot fail to make it acceptable to serious people. It is copied from the manuscript of Mr. Philip Pugh, of Cardiganshire, one of Mr. Jones's pupils.

"Awake, my glory, at length awake,
Give praise to God on high,
Who hath thy soul, with special grace,
Known in adversity.

Unto the shady vale of death
Thou broughtest me, O God ;
But strength I found then on Thy staff,
And honey on Thy rod.

Yea, when I wallowed in my blood,
And none could me retrieve,
Then, Lord, even then, Thou passedst
by,
And saidst unto me, Live.

Of death a sentence Thou did pass
Upon my drooping head,
That I might learn to trust in Thee,
Who raisest from the dead.

In judgment, not in fury, Lord,
Thou hast corrected me ;
And my affliction every drachm
Was weighèd out by Thee.

A throng of creatures daily wait,
Commissioned from above,
About my bed to serve my need,
All mixed with dearest love.

My food and physic now composed
Of strange varieties :
Both art and nature, for my sake,
Have drained their treasuries.

Inward supports and secret smiles
Thou didst me not deny ;
And unseen visits Thou didst give
To me most graciously.

My brethren and my Christian friends
Did daily visit me ;
And for my sinking life did lift
Their hands and hearts to Thee.

United prayers, mixed with faith,
Have for my life prevailed ;
The earnest cries of praying saints
With God have never failed.

Lord, heal my soul, purge out my
dross,
Renew me all within,
And by the blood of Christ remove
The guilt and filth of sin.

Increase my faith, support my hope,
Inflame my love and zeal,
And by the balm of sovereign grace
All my distempers heal.

And if it be Thy will, O God,
My life a little to spare,
That in the land of living ones,
Thy truth I may declare,—

A double portion of Thy grace
Vouchsafe to give to me,
That, by Thy blessing, I may turn
Some souls from sin to Thee."¹

¹ Calamy, vol. ii. pp. 721-29. We are also indebted, for many valuable facts contained in the foregoing sketch, to the Rev. R. P. Llewelyn, A.M., the present vicar of Llangynwyd, whose admirable letters in the *Bridgend Chronicle* for September and October, 1858, furnish every information respecting Mr. Jones and his family, which could be collected from entries in the parish register, and inscriptions on tombstones, in and about the church.



CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE RISE OF CALVINISTIC METHODISM, A.D. 1688—1735.

Landing of the Prince of Orange—The Perilous state of British Protestants—Churchmen becoming more conciliating—The Toleration Act—Ministers ordained—Erection of Chapels—Mob Persecutions—New Editions of the Welsh Bible—A Baptismal Controversy—Progress of Nonconformity—The Henllan Controversy—List of all the Welsh Churches, with the Number and Rank of the Members—The Knowledge and Piety of the Nonconformists—Religious Controversies—Another Baptismal Controversy—**THE GREAT ARMINIAN CONTROVERSY**—Increase of the Churches—Extracts from Church Records—The low state of Nonconformity in North Wales—Its Causes—Unfounded Inferences drawn therefrom—Incorrect Statements of the early Methodists—Millenarianism of the Antipædobaptists—Character and Prosecutions of the Friends—Biographical Sketches of Hugh Owen, John Owen, Edward Kenrick, Rees Protheroe, James Owen, David Owen, Jeremiah Owen, Charles Owen, D.D., Daniel Williams, D.D., Daniel Phillips, James Davies, Abel Morgan, Thomas Baddy, Matthias Maurice, Morgan Griffiths, Enoch Francis, James Lewis, James Davies, Philip Pugh, Christmas Samuel—Religious Literature of this Period.

THE landing of William, Prince of Orange, at Torbay, on the 5th of November, 1688, was a blessed event for Great Britain, and especially so for the Nonconformists. Their condition, previous to that day, was perilous in the extreme. "We were," says Mr. James Owen, "as Isaac bound to the altar. The bloody knife was at our throat; all things were ripe for execution. An army of Papists and debauched Protestants were within our gates, ready to enslave us. The fatal conjunction of England and France threatened the utter extirpation of the Protestant

interest. Whither could we look for help in that dismal juncture? In former persecutions of the Church, God opened a sanctuary elsewhere; but now the storm that threatened us was universal, and no place like to be safe; the power of the enemy reached to the very ends of the earth. The *American* churches felt the malignant influence of our constellations. Their foundations were overturned, and themselves left to the mercy of arbitrary men. If we fled to *Holland*, alas! they were but a morsel to the *French* tyrant. *Scotland* was enslaved. *Ireland* in possession of a bloody, barbarous people, that wanted neither power, nor hereditary inclination, to bathe themselves in Protestant blood. Foreign Protestants had their eyes upon us, and fled hither for refuge, but it was like leaping into the fire. We expected the second part of the French tragedy to be acted here, and knew not how soon we must be dragooned out of our religion and lives. In this dismal state of things, 'the Lord awaked as one out of sleep; he smote his enemies, and put them to perpetual reproach' (Psa. lxxviii. 65, 66).

"The Popish party in the two late reigns had interwoven *non-resistance* and *passive obedience* with the frame of the Government, by obliging all magistrates and ministers to swear that neither the King, nor any commissioned by him, must be resisted upon any pretence whatever. By this means they thought to make themselves absolute, and so to introduce Popery and slavery without opposition. And to make this new principle take the deeper root in men's minds, a number of mercenary divines were employed to preach up this enslaving doctrine, and to press it upon men's consciences, upon pain of damnation, as the distinguishing character of the Church of England. When those who had distinguished themselves by their blind zeal for this doctrine saw the consequence thereof—that it was turned as a two-edged sword upon themselves—they soon forgot their own doctrine and very generously sacrificed it to the common safety."¹

Finding that they had brought their church and country to the very brink of ruin, by their mad doctrines of non-resistance

¹ "Life of James Owen," pp. 42-44.

and passive obedience, Churchmen now began to caress their Nonconforming neighbours, whom they had treated with such cruelty for the previous twenty-eight years, and to seek their assistance to overthrow the Stuart dynasty, and place the Prince of Orange on the British throne. Those desirable objects having been attained, "the proposal for a toleration was immediately taken up; and on the 28th of February, 1689, the Earl of Nottingham presented the bill to the House of Lords. It was, he said, for substance the same with one which he had formerly drawn up and laid before Parliament in the reign of Charles II., when the nation was so violently agitated about the *Bill of Exclusion*, by which a Papist was declared incapable of sitting on the English throne. The bill appeared so reasonable, and so necessary for the public welfare, that it does not seem to have met with any serious opposition in passing through its different stages in either House; and it received the Royal assent on the 24th of May, 1689. Some indeed proposed to give it a limited duration, that the Dissenters might be kept upon their good behaviour; and at the close of the period might have it continued, abridged, or annulled, according to their deserts. But more generous sentiments prevailed. The good disposition of the nation at the time, for granting what all allowed to be conducive to the public tranquillity, was urged as a reason for granting it without a clause which must hurt the feelings of those whom it was designed to please."¹

The Act of Toleration was not so comprehensive and perfect as it should have been, and as the enlightened King wished it to be. It left the Test and Corporation Acts unrepealed, and excluded Anti-Trinitarians from its benefits; but considering the age in which it was enacted, and the number of persecuting Churchmen and sturdy Tories the King and his liberal advisers had to deal with, it was a wonderful achievement.

This boon was not received in any part of the kingdom with more joy and gratitude than it was by the oppressed Nonconformists of Wales. Several of the ejected ministers, who had weathered all the storms, were still alive; and considerable

¹ Bogue and Bennett's "History of the Dissenters," vol. i. p. 187.

numbers of young men were now studying for the ministry, under Mr. Samuel Jones, of Brynllwarch, and Mr. Rees Prytherch, of Ystrad Walter. Even in the year 1688, in anticipation of the liberty which they expected, the following persons were publicly ordained :—Mr. David Penry, of Llanedi ; Mr. Owen Davies, of Henllan ; Mr. William Evans, of Pencadair ; Mr. John James, of Llanybree ; Mr. David Edwards, of Ca'er Onen ; Mr. John Thomas, of Llechryd ; Mr. Daniel Phillips, of Pwllheli ; Mr. Thomas Benyon, of Brynberian ; Mr. David Richards, of Newtown ; Mr. Jenkin Thomas, of Wrexham ; and Mr. John Higgs.¹ All these were Independents and Presbyterians. Some young men among the Antipædobaptists were also set apart to the work of the Christian ministry about this time.

As soon as religious liberty was secured by Act of Parliament, the Welsh Nonconformists began with commendable diligence and earnestness to preach the gospel, and spread religious knowledge far and near. Large and convenient places of worship were erected at Pencadair, Cefnarthan, and Capel Isaac, in Caermarthenshire ; Tredustan in Brecknockshire ; Maesyronen, in Radnorshire ; Cardiff, Neath, and Swansea, in Glamorganshire ; and Haverfordwest, in Pembrokeshire, in the years 1689 and 1690. At Penmain, in Monmouthshire, in 1694 ; and Llanwenarth, in the same county, in 1695. At Henllan, in Caermarthenshire, in 1697 ; and as early as the year 1690, the Independent church at Llanybree, near Caermarthen, got possession of an Episcopal and consecrated chapel in the neighbourhood, which it occupies to the present day. An Episcopal writer early in the eighteenth century, referring to this fact, says—"The churches, most of them, are demolished, and even the use for which they were intended almost forgotten, unless it be at Llanybree, where I am told the impropiator, or his tenant, have let that church unto the neighbouring Dissenters, who are very free to rent it for the desirable opportunity and pleasure of turning a church into a conventicle."²

¹ Peter, "Hanes Crefydd," p. 594

² Saunders's "Religion in the Diocese of St. David's," p. 24. 1721.

From the year 1697 to 1712, thirty-eight places of worship, in addition to the forementioned, were erected in different counties, viz.—three in Monmouthshire, seven in Glamorganshire, nine in Caermarthenshire, four in Pembrokeshire, four in Cardiganshire, three in Brecknockshire, two in Radnorshire, and six in North Wales. But the number of chapels erected is not by any means a safe criterion by which an estimate of the number and strength of the congregations may be formed. Several strong and flourishing churches continued, for many years, to assemble in recorded dwelling-houses, on account of the difficulty of getting eligible sites for chapels, the scattered state of the members in different and distant localities, and various other circumstances. Thus we find that the church at Llanbrynmair continued to meet at a farmhouse, from 1675 to 1739; and such was the case with several other congregations which might be named.

The ejected and silenced ministers were compelled to discontinue their meetings, at some places, during the heat of persecution; but as soon as liberty was granted them, they resumed their meetings at those places, and set up meetings in several localities where they had none before. But while the Act of Toleration protected the Nonconformists from *legal* persecution, it could not effectually protect them from being insulted, disturbed, and abused by the mob, who were in most cases excited and abetted by the clergy and gentry.

The following account of the ill-treatment which Mr. James Owen met with in North Wales is only a specimen of what several of his brethren had to encounter in other parts of the Principality:—"When the prison doors were opened by Royal indulgence, and the Dissenting captives set at liberty, he studied how to promote religion in a more public manner, in diffusing the light of the gospel into the dark and distant corners of Wales. He set up several lectures, and took uncommon pains to support them, and very often at his own charge. The monthly lecture he set up at Ruthin, in Denbighshire, he afterwards removed into Denbigh, where he met with sharp opposition. The Justices refused to record the place, when it was duly certified to them, in contempt of the

Act which required them to do it, and then prosecuted them for a conventicle. But the Judges at the next assize severely reprimanded them for their refusal, and obliged them to do it.

“When he preached the first lecture, they were rudely treated in the most solemn acts of religion, indicted and fined upon the Conventicle Act; but this being effected by irregular procedures, they were discharged before the next Quarter Sessions. Mr. Owen, being advised to prosecute those who had illegally sentenced him, declined the advantage, saying only—‘I pray God to forgive them.’

“Another time, when he was preaching in the same town, the hair-brained mob, actuated by a superior influence, surrounded the house, broke the windows, disturbed and abused the assembly by throwing stones among them; but this piece of profane rudeness scorned even by heathens, proving ineffectual to answer their end, their fruitful invention directed them to another project. It happened there was then in town a debauched drummer from Ruthin, a fit and forward tool for the purpose, who was put on by some gentlemen to beat the drum under the window of the meeting-house, when the congregation were at Divine worship. Mr. Owen, when he could not be heard for noise, went on, unmoved at the indignity and impotent triumphs of blind rage. When the sermon was over, the saucy drummer was summoned before a magistrate, and being apprized of his danger, confessed his crime, and begged pardon; whereupon he was dismissed. Some years after, this poor fellow, being upon his deathbed, expressed a great deal of sorrow for disturbing that good man, as he was now pleased to call Mr. Owen.

“His violent opposers were numerous and powerful; but in a little time after, all of them dropped off, and a settled meeting has been kept up in that town ever since; and is now (1707) supplied by a very humble and industrious minister.

“Towards the latter end of 1690, he set up a lecture at Llanvyllin, in Montgomeryshire, at the house of one Mr. John Griffiths, a gentleman of character. When he preached the first sermon there, the house was surrounded with the rabble, who broke the windows, and disturbed the assembly by throwing

in stones : and the gentleman, coming to his door to appease the tumult, very narrowly escaped their fury. One of these poor wretches, being afterwards convinced of his folly, confessed to that gentleman's lady, as she told me herself—'He had never prospered since he had lift up his hand against the gospel.'

"He had lectures also at Wrexham, where he preached often, and administered the Lord's Supper. I could instance in a great many other places, where his success always equalled his faithful and unwearied endeavours."¹

The following statement also needs no comment :—"On the Sabbath day, Nov. 12, 1693, a meeting for religious worship was held at Ludlow, in a house legally licensed; during which time an alarm was sounded from the parish church, by ringing the bells backward, whereby great numbers of people gathered together, and in a riotous manner exceedingly disturbed the said meeting by clamorous noise and throwing in vast numbers of stones, bats, &c., many of them of several pounds weight, to the defacing of the house, breaking the windows, to the great terror and apparent hazard of the lives of the persons within, and the abrupt breaking up of the religious worship. The people who met, peaceably departing, were many of them set upon in the streets, abused, stoned, beaten, and pursued through the town. The bailiffs and constables of the town were that day absent, withdrawn to a small alehouse out of town to pass the Sabbath in, whereby no relief could be had against the said rioters.

"On Saturday, Nov. 18, the bailiffs were applied to, and advised of what happened through their absence, and their care and assistance desired to prevent the like the next day.

"On the Sabbath day, Nov. 19, another meeting was designed in the same place, and many persons with the minister congregated ; but such was the violence and greater hostilities threatened and apprehended, by great numbers of persons gathered together about the said place, on the same alarm from the parish church as the last Sabbath day, that no religious worship could be performed. Whereupon the people, peaceably departing

¹ "Life of James Owen," pp. 36, 37, 44.

homeward, were set upon and worse treated than the Sabbath before; and afterwards the house itself was assaulted, all the windows broken, the doors forced open, the signs broken down and carried away, the sign-post, part of the freehold, pulled down and broken, and the house itself only accidentally escaped the same fury, and several other houses were defaced. The bailiffs were in town all the while, but appeared not in the least to appease the riot.

"Monday, Nov. 20. A gentleman of the neighbourhood, at the desire of the master of the house, repaired thither to take view of the damage. Whereupon great numbers of people, with the parson's servant for their leader, came down to the said place, caused a great tumult and riot, whereby the gentleman ran great hazard of his life in going thence homeward. Also the master of the house was assaulted and abused, his home forcibly broke open, entered, and possessed a long time by the said rioters, to the great affrightment of his family and the damage of his house and goods, and it was several hours before the said insurrection was appeased." ¹

Nonconformists received the same treatment in every district of the Principality and the border English counties, where the clergy and the gentry were of a persecuting spirit, and had influence over the mob, from the enactment of the Toleration Act to nearly the close of the eighteenth century, as the following pages amply show.

The schools established by Mr. Thomas Gouge and others, together with the more frequent and public preaching of the gospel since the Royal declaration of liberty in 1687, had created an increased thirst for religious knowledge. The eight thousand copies of the Welsh Bible published in 1678 were sold off, and the urgent need of a new supply was now felt. About the time of Mr. Stephen Hughes's death (1688), his intimate friend and faithful fellow-labourer, Mr. David Jones, who had been ejected from Llandyssilio in 1662, undertook the responsible labour of editing and publishing a new edition of the sacred volume. It appeared in 1690. Mr. Jones received pecuniary assistance from Lord Wharton, and some ministers

¹ Harlean MSS., British Museum, vol. 6854, f. 21.

and citizens of London. We are not informed what number of copies this edition contained, but Dr. Calamy says that the editor himself distributed *ten thousand copies* in the Principality. A folio edition of the Welsh Bible, for the pulpits of the parish churches, was also published in the same year by Bishop Lloyd and others. Jones's edition "is not so handsomely printed; not on so good paper, nor with so neat a character, as the edition of 1678; otherwise, for size, type, and number of sheets, they are much alike."^{*} Still, notwithstanding its typographical inferiority, such a supply of Bibles was a great and invaluable boon to a people hungering for the Word of the Lord.

The Antipædobaptists in the eastern counties of South Wales, and the whole of North Wales, with the exception of three or four congregations, were in communion with the Pædobaptist churches; but Mr. William Jones's people, whose principal place of meeting was at Rhydwlilim, on the borders of the counties of Caermarthen and Pembroke, and the only Antipædobaptist church in these counties, were rigid close communionists. It appears that this church was made up chiefly of converts from the neighbouring Independent and Presbyterian churches, and that the members were very forward to introduce their peculiar opinions everywhere, but especially to the members of other churches. That proselyting spirit naturally created ill-feeling. After many private debates, both parties agreed to hold a public meeting at Penylan, near the Frenifawr, in Pembrokeshire, in the year 1692, when two sermons were to be preached upon the disputed subject. Mr. John Thomas, of Llwynygrawys, pastor of the Independent church at Llechryd, preached first on Pædobaptism; and on the succeeding day, Mr. John Jenkins, one of the pastors of the church at Rhydwlilim, preached on adult baptism.

The two sermons, so far from ending the dispute, proved to be only its beginning in earnest. Mr. Samuel Jones, of Brynllwarch, was requested to write in favour of Pædobaptism; but not being able to do it, owing to his age and the very precarious state of his health, his former pupil, Mr. James Owen, at his

^{*} Llewelyn's Account, p. 48.

urgent request, took it in hand. In the year 1693, he published a small duodecimo volume of 200 pages, entitled "Bedydd Plant o'r Nefoedd," *i.e.*, "Infant Baptism from Heaven." Mr. Owen dedicated his work to his venerable tutor, Mr. Samuel Jones. This is the first work which appeared in the Welsh language on the baptismal controversy. It is in every respect worthy of the famous author's superior talents and learning. "Of course, it made no small noise and stir in the country, and rendered it necessary for the Baptists also to have recourse to the press in their own vindication; but, unfortunately for them, they had not one, it seems, among themselves, within the whole country, that was capable of entering the lists with Mr. Owen. They were, therefore, obliged to apply to England; nor does it appear that they had any one, even there, of their own countrymen, that could be thought equal to the task: they were accordingly obliged to look among their English brethren, and they fixed upon Mr. Benjamin Keach. But they had to translate Mr. Owen's book into English, that Mr. Keach might answer it, and afterwards to translate Mr. Keach's into Welsh." * Mr. Keach's work was published in English in 1696, and soon after in Welsh. It is full four times the bulk of Mr. Owen's book, being above four hundred octavo pages. "The translation was not well executed, though tolerably intelligible." Mr. Keach has given to his volume the following long and assuming title:—"Light broke forth in Wales expelling darkness, or the Englishman's love to the Antient Britains; being an answer to a book intituled, 'Children's Baptism from Heaven,' published in the Welsh tongue by Mr. James Owen. Wherein his twelve arguments for the baptizing of the children of the faithful are examined and confuted, and Infant baptism overthrown. Also proving that Baptizing is dipping the whole body in water, in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that believers are the only subjects of baptism. In which the Antipædobaptists are cleared from all those unjust reproaches and calumnies cast upon them by the said Mr. Owen."

There are prefixed to the book two dedications. The first, "To all godly Antipædobaptists, especially to them in South

* "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial," pp. 342, 343.

and North Wales ;” and the second, “To all godly Christians, who are Pædobaptists, in South and North Wales.” The Anti-pædobaptists are thus addressed :—“Beloved in our dear Redeemer, at your desire I have, as the Lord hath helped me, answered Mr. James Owen’s book, in which he hath cast many false and slanderous reflections on you, and all other Antipædobaptists; but I have forborne returning railing for railing, though perhaps some of my words may seem a little too sharp, but his way of writing called for it. I hope the translation of his book, first out of Welsh into English, and again, the translation of my answer, out of English into Welsh, are done faithfully. If it be according to the true sense and purport of his words and meaning, the different placing of words he can have no ground to cavil at, but of that I am not capable to judge, because I understand not the Welsh tongue. He seems to reflect very severely upon some of your conversations, as if you wanted that true piety that becomes your holy profession, and also as if you wanted charity; but I hope it is his own uncharitable spirit that led him out thus to write, and that you are a people who rest not on the form of godliness without the power, and that you also love all in whom you see the image of Christ; the truth is, he of all men might have forborne such a charge, considering how short he himself appears in that respect, having laboured to cast you and all Antipædobaptists out of the universal church, and chargeth us, who dip believing men and women in the name of the Father, &c., with adultery and murder.¹ O that the Lord would open his eyes, and give him true repentance.

“Brethren, this answer hath swelled much bigger than you expected, which I am myself troubled at; but pray pardon me in this case, because this controversy was never before printed in the Welsh tongue, as I am informed, as it is here. I was

¹ Mr. Keach here brings a false charge against his learned opponent. Mr. Owen only says that the lives of delicate people might be endangered by being immersed in cold water in the winter season: and that the dipping of persons half-naked in the presence of a congregation is indecent, and might be an occasion to lead to the transgression of the seventh commandment.—*Bedydd Plant o’r Nefoedd*, pp. 186, 187. These remarks certainly might have been spared, but we cannot see how they can be construed into a charge of murder and adultery.

therefore willing the godly in Wales, or any of the antient Britains that desired information herein, might see the main arguments that other Pædobaptists have brought for infant baptism fully answered. The substance therefore of Mr. Burkitt's late book is in this also answered, and divers others; nay, there is scarcely an argument that hath been brought for infant baptism, formerly, or of late, but it is here answered. And now to conclude, let me desire you to labour to adorn the holy gospel you profess, with a suitable and becoming conversation. It is not an external ordinance that signifies anything, without true faith and a holy life. You have lamps, but O, see that you have oil in your vessels. Not that I blame you for your great zeal for this precious, though despised, truth of Christ, considering what a glorious and illustrious institution or blessed ordinance it is," &c.

The dedication, "to all godly Christians who are Pædobaptists in South and North Wales," runs in the following strain:—"You worthy brethren and Antient Britains, I kindly salute you in the bowels of Christian love and sincere affections; I cannot but love all who have the image of my heavenly Father stamped upon their souls. It is not your opinion of Pædobaptism, though an error, that shall alienate my heart from you, nor restrain that catholic love that should run in all the veins of every one that is born of God; though I am an enemy to your opinion and practice, in that case, yet a dear lover of your persons and precious souls. *And I have so much charity to believe that it is through ignorance you err in that matter, and that God hath for some wise ends hid the truth of His holy ordinance of Gospel baptism at present from you; and do hope, did you see otherwise, you would practise otherwise; charity thinketh no evil,*" &c.

It is doubtful whether the godly Pædobaptists of Wales felt very thankful to Mr. Keach for this stretch of his charity, for while it absolved them from the guilt of hypocrisy, it left them under the cheerless sentence of judicial blindness.

The Antipædobaptists were evidently not satisfied with Mr. Keach's large volume, for shortly after its appearance they published a translation of Narcott's "Baptism Plainly Dis-

covered." Mr. Owen, in 1701, published a smart reply to both, and there the dispute ended.

It must be confessed that the contending parties, in their treatment of each other in this controversy, did not keep within the proper bounds of Christian courtesy. While the Antipædobaptists on the one hand manifested such confidence, boldness, and assumption as ill comported with their very defective education, the Pædobaptists on the other treated their unlearned opponents with most unbecoming scorn and contempt. Mr. John Thomas, being an Oxonian, probably felt mortified that an unlearned farmer should have the boldness to confront him before a large congregation. When Mr. John Jenkins requested to be favoured with a sight of the notes of his sermon on Pædobaptism, he is said to have replied, scornfully, that they were written in Greek. Mr. James Owen, also, has inserted in the title page of his "*Bedydd Plant o'r Nefoedd*," Latin, Greek, and Syriac quotations, evidently to provoke his opponents; for he well knew that none of them understood any language but the Welsh, and a little common English.

Controversies have never proved favourable to a devotional frame of mind. It is probable that this controversy was not an exception to the general rule, and that the parties chiefly concerned in it found their personal piety anything but improved by their contentions. However, there is not the least foundation for the sweeping assertion of Johnes, in his "*Causes of Dissent in Wales*," that the Nonconformists of this period had so exhausted their strength by controversies on the rite of baptism, that their cause continued to decline till the breaking out of Methodism. We have no account of more than two baptismal controversies among the Welsh Nonconformists from the year 1688 to 1735. The first, in Pembrokeshire, in 1692; and the second, in Monmouthshire, from 1727 to 1732: and these two disputes, whatever may have been their effect on the devotional frame of the leaders, were so far from weakening the cause of Nonconformity in the localities where they were carried on, that we find the congregations principally concerned in them, at the breaking out of Methodism, the most strong and flourishing in the Principality.

While the Nonconforming churches, towards the close of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, sustained very heavy losses in the deaths of several of their most eminent ministers, still their cause continued to gain ground. Though we have no account of any remarkably powerful revival in the first twenty years of the eighteenth century, yet as many of the records of the old churches as are preserved furnish us with clear proofs that religion and Nonconformity were steadily, though silently, advancing during the whole of this period.¹ The number of meeting-houses erected, of houses recorded for preaching, and the various religious books published in these years, are also evident proofs of progress.

The Welsh Nonconformists, with the exception of the Quakers, and perhaps one Antipædobaptist church in Radnorshire, were all Calvinists in doctrine and Congregationalists in church polity, until the beginning of the eighteenth century. About that time, a part of the church at Wrexham, in Denbighshire, sympathizing with the views of their former fellow-townsmen, Dr. Daniel Williams, separated from the Congregational church in that town, and set up a Presbyterian interest there. Dr. Williams's views, which scarcely differ in anything from moderate Calvinism, were then branded by High Calvinists as Baxterianism, Neominianism, &c. Thomas Edwards, Esq., a member of the Congregational church at Wrexham, published in 1699 a huge quarto volume, entitled "Baxterianism Barefaced," in which he abuses Mr. Baxter, Dr. Williams, and all other authors whom he regarded as unsound, in the most intemperate style. But as this controversy was carried on exclusively in the English language, it had hardly any effect on the Welsh churches, at least for some years. However, about the year 1707 we find the church at Henllan, in Caermarthenshire, under the ministry of Mr. David Owen, the eldest brother of Mr. James Owen, of Oswestry, agitated by a controversy on the same, or similar, points.

¹ Jones's "History of Aberystroth," pp. 98, 99. "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 230. Also the Records of the Churches at Cilgwyn, Capel Isaac, and Pantteg.

The pastor, and probably the majority of the church, appear to have been extremely moderate Calvinists, or rather Baxterians, and leaning more towards Presbyterianism than Independency; while the two teaching elders, Mr. Lewis Thomas and Mr. Henry Palmer, Mr. Matthias Maurice, a young preacher, and then a student at Caermarthen, together with many of the other members, were High Calvinists and rigid Independents. Disputes of a rather intemperate character on these points were carried on in the church without intermission from 1707 to 1710. Appeals were repeatedly made to ministers' meetings, and almost every minister in the Western counties of South Wales tried his skill to reconcile the contending parties, but all attempts of the kind proved ineffectual. The ministers, in the various conferences they held on the subject, sided more with Mr. Owen and his party than with the High Calvinists, not because they generally preferred Low Calvinism and Presbyterianism to the more rigid doctrinal views and the Congregational polity, but merely on account of their disapproval of the *mode* and spirit in which that party defended their peculiar views, and the extremes to which they carried them on some points.

On the death of Mr. David Owen in 1710, and the appointment of his son, Mr. Jeremiah Owen, to succeed him, the Independent party withdrew, and formed themselves into a Congregational church at Rhydyceisiaid, a few miles from Henllan. They elected Mr. Lewis Thomas to be their pastor, and Mr. Henry Palmer their teaching elder. Branches of this church were soon after formed into distinct churches at Glandwr, in Pembrokeshire; and the Moors, near St. Clears, in Caermarthenshire. The church at Henllan in course of time changed their views; and after dismissing Mr. Jeremiah Owen, invited Mr. Henry Palmer to return to them. He was ordained to be their pastor in October, 1721, and continued to labour among them with great success till his death in 1742.

This controversy may be regarded as the commencement of a series of disputes, which gradually led to the division of the Nonconformist body into the Calvinistic and Arminian parties; and the latter again into the Trinitarian and Anti-Trinitarian

divisions. The progressive development of these different and antagonistic creeds will appear as we proceed with our history.

This agitation, whatever evils might have attended it at that time, proved afterwards advantageous to the Welsh churches, at least it proved so to Independency and Calvinism, for they are indebted to it for their very existence in the Principality. The state of things at Henllan, which caused this disturbance—ignoring the cardinal doctrines of the gospel, preaching mere morality, lax discipline, and a leaning towards the Presbyterian form of church government—seems to have more or less affected other neighbouring congregations at that time, and would, most probably, have pervaded all the Nonconforming churches throughout Wales unnoticed, had it not been for this storm. Ever after, the Welsh churches have not been without vigilant persons to watch and report the least deviation from orthodoxy. That this class of persons have done incalculable good, and in many instances prevented a world of evil, is undeniable; but, on the other hand, it must be confessed that there have been found among them, from time to time, individuals whose characters, violent tempers, and want of prudence, often disgraced the cause which they professed to defend.

Amongst the leaders of the movement at Henllan, Matthias Maurice, though the youngest, seems to have been the most resolute, able, and talented defender of his party. In the year 1711 he published a translation of Dr. Chauncey's "Doctrine according to Godliness," which is a comprehensive body of divinity in the catechetical form, and in the High Calvinistic strain. In the same year, also, a translation of "Coles on God's Sovereignty," by Mr. Howell Powell, minister of the Congregational church at Gwenddwr, in Brecknockshire, appeared. These volumes were intended as antidotes to the erroneous, or rather the negative views which were then beginning to spread. Such was the importance of the separation from Henllan, and the formation of the Congregational churches at Rhydyceisiaid, Glandwr, and the Moors, and its bearing on the orthodoxy of the Welsh churches, in Mr. Maurice's estimation, that he published a short account of it

in 1727, after the lapse of nearly twenty years. In 1732 Mr. Jeremiah Owen's reply to Mr. Maurice's pamphlet appeared. It is most cleverly written in defence of his father and the party who sided with him, but its spirit cannot be commended. Both these pamphlets were written in the Welsh language.

About the year 1715, Dr. John Evans, author of the "Sermons on the Christian Temper," collected, with remarkable care and industry, the statistics of the Nonconforming congregations throughout England and Wales. These valuable returns are still preserved, in the Doctor's own handwriting, at Dr. Williams's Library, Grafton Street, London. The returns from South and North Wales were sent in by Mr. Charles Lloyd, of Brecknockshire; and those for Monmouthshire by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Joseph Stennett, who then resided at Abergavenny. They are not as full and complete as it could be desired, but still their value is incalculable. The letters after the names of places denote the denomination—I, for Independent; P, for Presbyterian; and A, for Antipædobaptist. Some notes, respecting the removals and deaths of ministers, were added to the original manuscript by the Doctor and others in later years.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

Place.	Minister.	Average attendance.	Social and Political Standing.
Abergavenny, I.	Thomas Cole (removed to Gloucester in 1718)	280	1 esquire, 16 gentlemen, 7 yeomen, 63 tradesmen, 1 farmer, 7 labourers, 13 votes for the county of Monmouth, 3 for Brecknockshire, 1 for Glamorganshire, 1 for Herefordshire, 23 for the borough of Monmouth, 3 for Bristol, and 3 for Hereford.
St. Bride's and Newport, I.	David Williams	236	6 gentlemen, 16 yeomen, 28 tradesmen, 19 farmers, 30 labourers, 23 votes for the county, and 9 for the borough.
Penmain, I.	David Williams (different from the former)	250	4 gentlemen, 38 yeomen, 5 tradesmen, 8 farmers, 35 labourers, 22 votes for the county of Monmouth, 2 for Glamorgan, and 4 for the borough of Monmouth.

MONMOUTHSHIRE (*continued*).

Place.	Minister.	Average attendance.	Social and Political Standing.
Llandegveth, I.	D. Williams, Penmain	100	2 gentlemen, 12 yeomen, 5 tradesmen, 7 farmers, 14 labourers, 14 votes for the county, and 25 for the borough.
Park, in the parish of Cwmioi, I.	James Watkins, residing at Brecon.	120	4 gentlemen, 12 yeomen, 4 tradesmen, 10 farmers, 25 labourers, 8 votes for Monmouthshire, 8 for Herefordshire, 1 for Brecknockshire.
Trosnant, in the parish of Trevechin, I.	Jeremiah Edmunds	90	6 yeomen, 10 tradesmen, 8 farmers, 18 labourers, 3 votes for the county, and 1 for the borough.
Llanvrechva, I.	Jeremiah Edmunds	55	4 yeomen, 6 tradesmen, 4 farmers, 12 labourers, 3 county votes, and 1 borough vote.
Goitre, near Usk, I.	Morgan Thomas	120	5 gentlemen, 10 yeomen, 12 tradesmen, 20 farmers, 15 labourers, 13 votes for the county, and 15 for the borough.
Glyn Ebbw, in the parish of Aberystroth, I.	Daniel Rogers	60	10 yeomen, 6 tradesmen, 8 farmers, 12 labourers, 10 votes for the county, and 2 for the borough.
Cromindee, I.	Rice Davies		
Usk and Langwm, A.	Nathaniel Morgan	200	7 gentlemen, 7 yeomen, 10 tradesmen, 17 farmers, 40 labourers, 14 county votes, 13 borough votes.
Aberystroth & Mynyddislwyn, A.	William Phillips John Harry	1000	126 yeomen, 54 tradesmen, 98 farmers, 113 labourers, 123 votes for Monmouthshire, 1 for Glamorganshire, and 26 for the borough of Monmouth.
Llanwenarth, A.	Joshua James	420	2 esquires, 10 gentlemen, 34 yeomen, 36 tradesmen, 27 farmers, 54 labourers, 37 votes for the county of Monmouth, 11 for Brecknockshire, 56 for the borough of Monmouth, and 1 for Bristol.
Castletown, A.	Timothy Lewis	60	4 gentlemen, 3 yeomen, 4 tradesmen, 7 farmers, 16 labourers, 7 votes for the county,

ANGLESEA.

Same minister as in Caernarvonshire. Number of hearers included in the number for Caernarvonshire.

BRECKNOCKSHIRE.

Place.	Minister.	Average attendance.	Social and Political Standing.
Dyffrynhonddu P.	John Davies	150	Several voters.
Tredustan, I.	John Powell (died 1729)	250	40 voters.
Brecon, I.	James Watkins	70	8 voters.
Llanavan and Llanwrtyd, I.	James Davies	800	30 voters.
Llangynider, I.	Evan John	100	Several voters.
Olchon, Trosgoed, &c., A.	Richard Williams	400	Few voters.

CARDIGANSHIRE.

Cardigan, I.	David Saise		
Kilcam, Rhyddlogyn, Tre-lwyn, P.	John David Thomas Beynon (died 1728)	250	Few voters.
Kilgwyn, and 5 or 6 other places, I.	David Edwards, Jenkin Jones, Phillip Pugh, (scholars)	1000	20 voters.

CAERMARTHENSHIRE.

Caermarthen and Bwlch-newydd, P.	William Evans (scholar) Thomas Bowen, John Pugh	600	17 voters.
Henllan, P.	John Pugh	700	11 voters.
Rhydyceisiaid, Moor and Aberelwyn, I.	Lewis Thomas, Henry Palmer	800	9 voters.
Trelech and Cynwyl, P.	Lewis Richards	150	7 voters.
Pencadair and Rhydybont, P.	James Lewis, David Jones	450	17 voters.

CAERMARTHENSHIRE (*continued*).

Place.	Minister.	Average attendance.	Social and Political Standing.
Pantteg, Llanegwad, and Waungaled, P.	Christmas Samuel	400	11 voters.
Mynyddbach (Capel Isaac) P.	William Davies	400	10 voters.
Llanedi, Cru-gybar, Cru-gymaen, P.	David Penry, Owen Hughes, David Jenkins	600	30 voters.
Capel Sion and Llettyhaw-ddgar, P.	Christodocius Lewis (removed to Radnorshire), Samuel Jones	500	10 voters
Glynnyrefail in the parish of Cilycwm, P.	Christmas Samuel, David Jones, John Harries	300	Few voters.
Llanybree, P.	Thomas Morris	400	6 voters.
Cefnarthren, P.	Roger Williams	250	20 voters.
Felinfoel, A.	Morgan John, John Davies.		

CAERNARVONSHIRE.

Pwllheli and Caernarvon, I.	Daniel Phillips, scholar, died 1722.	250	1 esquire, 5 votes for the county, and 8 for the borough.
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DENBIGHSHIRE.

Denbigh, P.	Thomas Baddy, scholar, died June, 1729	60	1 member worth between four and five thousand pounds, and 3 worth five hundred each, the rest tradesmen and farmers, no beggars, 8 votes for the county, and 12 for the borough.
Wrexham, P.	John Kenrick, ordained Oct. 21, 1707.	230	20 tradesmen, 29 votes for the county, and 3 for the borough.
Ditto, A.	John Williams, scholar, ¹ died 1724.	150	14 tradesmen, 23 votes for the county, and 6 for the borough.

¹ Mr. Williams was a Pædobaptist till 1715. After his change of views most of the Pædobaptist members of his church joined the Presbyterian church.

FLINTSHIRE.

Place.	Minister.	Average attendance.	Social and Political Standing.
Newmarket, P.	Richard Humphreys, conformed 1718 Jonathan Davies succeeded in 1721	30	1 member worth between fourteen and fifteen thousand pounds, 1 vote for the county, and 3 for the borough.

GLAMORGANSHIRE.

Swansea, I.	George Denbury	250	15 votes.
Cardiff, P.	Rice Protheroe, scholar, ordained Jan. 16, 1702		
Cwmlllynfell, &c., I.	Llewellyn Bevan, Roger Howell, John Davies, removed	600	15 single and 14 double votes.
Neath, Ty'r-dwncyn, and Blaengwrach I.	Thomas Davies, David Thomas, removed	1006	50 votes, several double votes.
Kildeudy, near Bridgend, I.	Rees Price, John Thomas		
Gellybion and Pilton in Gower, I.	David Jones	200	40 votes.
Gwynfe, &c., I. (in Caermarthenshire)	Llewellyn Bevan, Roger Howell, as before	550	21 votes.
Swansea, A.	Morgan John		
Llanvabon, A.			
Near Conffyg, A.			
Cefnhenngoed, in the parish of Gellygaer, A.	Morgan Griffith	700	2 gentlemen, 40 yeomen, 12 tradesmen, 85 farmers, 140 labourers, 20 votes for the county of Glamorgan, 22 for the county of Monmouth, and 60 for the boroughs.
Hendref, A.	Ditto	300	12 yeomen, 5 tradesmen, 30 farmers, 70 labourers, 12 votes for the county, and 70 for the borough.

MERIONETHSHIRE.

Place.	Minister.	Average attendance.	Social and Political Standing.
Bronycludwr, Dolgelly & Bala, I.	Edward Kenrick, ordained August 18, 1702	150	1 esquire, 12 votes for the county.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

Newtown, in and near P.	Peter Seddon, David Richard	120	2 gentlemen, 4 freeholders, 5 votes for the county, and 1 for the borough.
Llanvyllin and Pantmawr, I.	William Jervis, scholar	110	10 gentlemen, 1 freeholder, 5 votes for the county, and 9 for the borough.
Llanbrynmair, and Trefe-glwys, I.	Ditto	90	1 freeholder, 1 vote for the county, and 1 for the borough.
Llanlligan, I.	Ditto	100	All poor people.

PEMBROKESHIRE.

Pembroke, I.	Thomas Davies, scholar		
Haverfordwest, I.	Thomas Davies, Evan Davies		
Trefgarn, I.	Hugh Harris, 80 years old		
New Chapel, Newport, & Trewen, P.	Thomas Beynon	500	22 voters.
Rhydwillim, Llangloffan, Kilvowyr, &c., A.	John Jenkins, Thomas Mathias, Philip John, David James	900	8 voters.

RADNORSHIRE.

Rhaiader, I.	Thomas Walters, scholar	400	40 voters.
Gym, in the parish of Disserth, I.	Christodocius Lewis	200	30 voters.
Maesgwyn, Knighton, &c., I.	Halley, Phillips, Walters, Vavasor Griffiths	300	Several voters

RADNORSHIRE (*continued*).

Place.	Minister.	Average attendance.	Social and Political Standing,
Maesyronen, I.	David Price	250	20 voters.
New Radnor, Llanmihangel-nant- melyn, Glas- gwm, &c., A.	Thomas Lewis	400	12 have double votes.
Cobin, Llanddewi, Llanbadarn, Blaenyglyn in Montgomeryshire, and Pentref in Brecknockshire, A.	Nathan Davies, Caleb Evans, John Evans	600	Several voters.

The foregoing list contains all the Nonconforming congregations in Wales and Monmouthshire in the year 1715, with the exception of the Independent congregation at Merthyr Tydvil, and the Antipædobaptist congregation which usually met at Glandwr, in Cardiganshire, and Felindre, near Newcastle Emlyn. We are not able to account for the omission of these two, and especially that at Merthyr Tydvil, which was one of the largest congregations in Wales. Persons unacquainted with the country might be led, by consulting this list, to infer that there were only seventy-one congregations in the thirteen counties, because two, three, and even five or six of those, under the care of the same ministers, are united and represented as one, while to all intents and purposes they were distinct. Our forefathers' idea of a church or congregation was very different from ours: they generally regarded any number of congregations that were presided over by the same minister as one congregation—thus, in this list we find Llanedi, Crugybar, and Crugymaen, united as if they constituted only one church, while the distance from Llanedi to Crugymaen is full forty miles, and from both to Crugybar about twenty miles: the reader should therefore understand that, though there were only seventy-one or less distinct *pastoral charges*

in the thirteen counties at that time, there were above 110 distinct congregations, besides a considerable number of recorded dwelling-houses where religious services were occasionally held.

It will be observed that returns of the average number of hearers have been received from only fifty-eight of the places or pastoral charges named, and that the aggregate amount of these is 20,007, or about 345 for each charge. By estimating the other thirteen, which made no returns, at 345 each, which would be rather below than above the mark, the aggregate number would amount to 24,485. To this number, again, at least 3000 should be added, as the average of the attendants at the meetings of the Friends, who were then comparatively numerous and influential in several parts of the Principality; thus the total number would amount to 27,485. But as it is an admitted rule, in estimating the number of persons belonging to any place of worship, to regard the actual number of attendants at any ordinary service as only a little more than one-half of the people who consider such a place as their usual place of worship, we may safely calculate that *fifty thousand*, or about one-eighth of the population of Wales in 1715, were Nonconformists.

The evident reason why the social and political standing of the members of the congregations is described with such minuteness was, that repeated and desperate attempts were made by the High Church party, and the Tories, in the reign of Queen Anne, to deprive the Nonconformists of their liberty. They looked to the Whigs for protection against the persecuting measures of the Tories, and at that threatening time it was of the utmost importance to them that both their friends and foes should know what was their real strength.

The agitation originated by the notorious Dr. Sackeverell, who rose the cry "The Church in danger," spread over large districts of England and some districts of Wales. On the accession of George I., and the formation of a Whig Government, the cry was renewed with violent vehemence—"The Church in danger! down with the Whigs and the Dissenters!" The infuriated mob, set on by the High Church clergy, the

Jacobites, and their faithful allies the Tories, demolished several Dissenting chapels, and among others the chapels at Wrexham, Shrewsbury, and Llanfyllin. The doings of the rioters at Wrexham is thus described in the diary of the Rev. John Kenrick:—

“Tuesday, July 12, 1715.—There was a riot of the tradesmen and the principal inhabitants of the town.

“Saturday, July 16.—The rioters broke into the Meeting-house at Wrexham, pulled down the pulpit and pews, and threw them into a pool, broke down the door, and shattered the windows. The old Meeting was uncovered, and the slates and laths and wall destroyed the same night.

“Sunday, July 17.—Being Lord’s day, the children and young people did a great deal of harm to the new Meeting. Mr. Williams and I preached at Mr. Hugh Roberts’ house to a numerous and mournful assembly. From that day until the old Meeting-house was repaired, Mr. Williams continued to preach the Word and administer the Sacrament at Mr. Roberts’ and I at Mrs. Nicholls’.

“Monday, July 18.—The colliers came to town to protect and assist the rioters. We applied to Mr. Watkin Williams,[†] who was at Wrexham on that day. He came to them with his hat in his hand, and desired them to forbear. He took away one of them along with him. He told the rioters not to do any mischief while they staid in town; a few of them were prevailed with, and prevented from doing further mischief till evening. This night the townspeople did a great deal of harm, uncovering the roof, breaking the woodwork, demolishing the outer walls, breaking the door-frames and window-frames.

“Tuesday, 19.—For the evening they came to their work again.

“Wednesday, 20.—The rioters at work.

“Thursday, 21.—A great deal of mischief done.

“Thursday, 28.—Again at it in a most violent manner. They staid till morning. Then went about the town in a most violent manner.

[†] An ancestor of Sir W. W. Wynne, of Wynnstay.

"Saturday, 30.—Last night those workers of iniquity were again employed.

"August 1, being the day of the King's ascension to the crown, was not all observed at Wrexham, except by the Dissenters, who had a sermon preached on that day, and shut up their shops; but no bells were rung, no bonfires, nor illuminations—the ordinary marks of public rejoicing.

"October 10.—The King's Coronation day; the bells were rung, but at night great riots and disorders were committed, and the Dissenters' bonfires were put out, their windows broken, the meeting-houses threatened, and the mob beat at the doors. Treasonable songs were sung about the streets, and great disorder tolerated. '*They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city*' (Psalm lxi. 6)."

About the same time the mob, led by a Mr. Griffiths of Bodfach, who was then, or the year after, High Sheriff of the county of Montgomery, attacked the Congregational chapel at Llanfyllin, and utterly demolished it. Soon after the riot, the county Assizes were held in that town, and the judge, Sir Joseph Jekyl, riding to the town with the High Sheriff, when passing the ruins of the chapel, asked him what had taken place there. He answered that the mob had demolished the Dissenting chapel. The judge severely reprimanded the High Sheriff and the other magistrates for not using their authority to prevent such an outrage; and commanded them to bring all the guilty party before him ere he would leave the town. Not one of them was brought forward. The High Sheriff, the Vicar, and the other Tory local gentry, who had instigated the rioters to do the mischief, in order not to expose themselves, advised the deluded rioters to abscond. Many of them, to the grief of their families, never returned to their homes. Sir J. Jekyl was so displeased at the unmanly and underhand proceedings of the Tory officials of the borough, that he decided upon removing the Assizes from Llanfyllin to Welshpool, where they are held ever since.¹ The chapels at Wrexham and Llanfyllin were afterwards restored at the expense of the State.

¹ Davies's "Struggles of Independency at Llanfyllin," p. 15.

The Nonconformists have never conspired, in or out of Parliament, to overthrow one political party and set up another, though they have in all ages naturally sympathized more with their friends, the Whigs, than their inveterate enemies, the Tories. The old slander of being political disturbers, with which the Saviour of the world, and persons and parties in every age, who either attempted to reform corrupt churches, or dissented from them, have been reproached, has been unsparingly cast on the Nonconformists of Wales, from the days of William Wroth to the present day ; but the glaring fact, that all the representatives of a nation of Dissenters are Churchmen, and the majority of them Conservatives of the old and most rigid school, is a sufficient refutation of that false and malicious calumny.¹

The Nonconformists of this period were remarkable for their zeal and care to have all the members of their churches well grounded in religious knowledge. They seldom admitted any one to church communion, especially young persons, who could not answer any question in the Assembly's Catechism. They had no Sabbath schools, in the modern form, but they had stated meetings for catechizing their young people. The following extracts from the record of the church at Mynyddbach, or Capel Isaac, in the parish of Llandilo, Caermarthen-shire, will serve as an instance to show how reluctant the early Nonconformists were to admit ignorant persons to the Lord's Supper.

"Anne Rees, widow of Harry Evan Morgan, was received to church communion at Mynyddbach, the 5th day of December, 1736. Being very old and illiterate, she has but little knowledge ; however, she is much altered in her conversation from what she was formerly."

"Edward John Harry was received to church communion at Mynyddbach, Feb. 26th, 1737. His knowledge is very defective, yet he has the character of being an earnest man. Great alteration is seen in him from what he was before."

¹ An improvement has taken place since the above was written in 1860. All the Welsh members are now Liberals, with two exceptions, and seven of them are Nonconformists.

“Evan David Evan was received to church communion at Mynyddbach, June 18, 1738. He is very young, yet he has a good stock of knowledge, and he has the character that he lives accordingly.”

“Evan Thomas Evan, near Cwmysgyfarnog, was examined and received to church communion at Mynyddbach, the 17th of February, 1745. He was examined one month before, and we delayed to receive him, until we would endeavour to catechize him better, and lead him to more knowledge of the fundamental principles of religion.”

With all their zeal for the diffusion of knowledge, they did not neglect to inculcate the essential necessity of personal piety. They made themselves objects of ridicule to unconverted Churchmen, and the men of the world, by their proverbial Puritan strictness. Conformity to the world was the exception, not the rule, in the Nonconforming churches previous to the rise of Calvinistic Methodism; but those churches who embraced Arminian sentiments, after the year 1735 (and only one church in the Principality did openly profess those sentiments previous to that year), became less strict in their morals. Their renunciation of Puritan doctrines led them gradually to renounce Puritan seriousness and strictness of morals.

If religious controversies are not in themselves certain indications of a very exalted state of piety, they are, to say the least, indications of some life and earnest thinking. The entire absence of discussions and disagreements in a religious community, for any considerable length of time, is a certain sign of either the grossest ignorance, or the most culpable inattention to religious subjects. Controversies, properly conducted, are not to be altogether condemned; but bitterness of spirit in conducting them, which has been too often manifested, is certainly most unworthy of the professors of piety.

A class of people so well instructed in the various doctrines of theology as the Welsh Nonconformists of this period were, as might be expected, often engaged in controversies. We have already given some account of three—the baptismal controversies at Abergavenny in 1653, and in Pembrokeshire in 1692, and the Calvinistic and Presbyterian controversy at

Henllan in 1707, &c., but those were only the beginning of more extensive and important agitations. About the year 1726 or 1727, in consequence of a large addition of members to the churches in the previous five or six years, baptism became again the subject of hot and prolonged disputes in the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan. "There were two young ministers then very zealous in the debate, Mr. Miles Harries for believer's baptism, and Mr. Edmund Jones for infant baptism. It had at length so disturbed the country, that both sides appointed a meeting upon the subject; not so much to debate it, as to take more care of tempers, censures, &c. There were several ministers present; some concessions made, and one forgave the other, and agreed in future to aim at the glory of God, the credit of the gospel, and the preserving of each other's reputation. The agreement was written, signed, and printed, on half a sheet. The Baptists who signed were Mr. Morgan Griffith, of Hengoed, and Mr. John Harries and Mr. Miles Harries, of Blaenau; the Pædobaptists, Messrs. David Williams, Daniel Rogers, and Edmund Jones, of Penmain; James Davies, Evan John, and Jenkin Lewis, of Merthyr Tydvil: these were all pastors, preachers, or candidates. Five attested the agreement, who were all Independent ministers, namely, Fowler Walker, of Abergavenny, Thomas Morgan, Llanwrtyd, Rees Davies, of Hanover, Rees Protheroe, of Cardiff, and Thomas Lewis, afterwards of Llanharan. This agreement was attended to for some years. It was dated in 1728; but early in 1732 a piece upon infant baptism was published in English by Mr. Walker, the first witness above. It was soon published also in Welsh. For this reason our brethren agreed, at the Blaenau Association, to publish in Welsh Mr. Charles Doe's small tract of forty texts of Scripture, on believer's baptism; and a letter was sent to Mr. Walker by Mr. David Rees, of London, turned into Welsh, and printed the same year, with a promise therein that his book would be further considered at leisure."¹ This promise was fulfilled in 1734, when Mr. Rees published a large treatise on baptism.

¹ Thomas's "History of the Welsh Baptists' Association," pp. 45, 46. "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 239-40.

All the former controversies, in which the Welsh Nonconformists had been engaged, sink to nothing in their importance and consequences when compared with the GREAT ARMINIAN CONTROVERSY, which began about the year 1729. Those were disputes about mere non-essentials, and whatever evil effects might have attended them at the time, they soon disappeared ; but in this controversy those points which are generally regarded as the essential and peculiar doctrines of revealed religion, became the subjects of discussion ; for though the advocates of the new views, at first, only professed Arminian sentiments, yet it was such a kind of Arminianism that led them direct to Arianism, and ultimately to Unitarianism. This unhappy agitation, in the course of a few years, divided the unhappy Nonconformist body into two hostile, antagonistic, and irreconcilable parties.

It is not known that Mr. Perrot, the tutor of the academy at Caermarthen, was an Arminian himself ; but many, if not the majority, of his students became in course of time the open advocates of Arminian, or rather Pelagian, sentiments. The first preacher of these doctrines in Wales was Mr. Jenkin Jones. He was originally a member of the Independent church at Pantycreuddyn, near Llandyssil, Cardiganshire, then under the pastoral care of Mr. James Lewis, of Pencadair. He was admitted to the academy at Caermarthen in 1721, and soon after the expiration of his time there married a wealthy lady in Cardiganshire. Having erected the meeting-house called Llwynrhydowen, on his own estate, he was ordained there in April, 1726. It is almost certain that he had not openly professed Arminianism previous to his ordination ; for, if he had, it is doubtful that any minister in Wales would have consented to ordain him. Being a very amiable young man, a popular preacher, and in affluent circumstances, he soon gathered a large congregation. Early in the year 1729, if not before, he began to propagate his peculiar sentiments. For some years he was the only *public* advocate of those views among the Pædobaptists, though probably some young ministers, and many of the Caermarthen students, *secretly* sympathized with him, while they either had too little courage, or too much craftiness, to declare

their opinions publicly at that time. Among the Antipædobaptists he found three active coadjutors : Mr. Abel Francis, one of the ministers of the church at Newcastle Emlyn ; Mr. Rees Davies, a schoolmaster, and a respected member of the same church ; and Mr. Charles Winter, one of Mr. Perrot's students, and a candidate for the ministry at Hengoed, in Glamorganshire.

This Arminian heresy, as it was called, was looked at with horror, and created a considerable sensation throughout the churches. At the Antipædobaptist Association held at Llangloffan, Pembrokeshire, Whitsun week, 1729, it was agreed that the catechism—either Mr. Keach's or the Assembly's Catechism—as altered by Mr. Abel Morgan, and "Coles on the Sovereignty of God," should be immediately reprinted, to counteract the Arminian doctrines which were then beginning to disturb the churches. About the close of the same year an anonymous pamphlet appeared, under the title "Cyfrif Cywir o'r Pechod Gwreiddiol," *i.e.*, "A Correct Account of Original Sin." It is generally believed that Mr. Jenkin Jones was the author. In June, 1730, Messrs. James Lewis, of Pencadair, and Christmas Samuel, of Pantteg, published a reply to it, entitled "Y Cyfrif Cywiraf, o'r Pechod Gwreiddiol," *i.e.*, "The most Correct Account of Original Sin." In 1733, Mr. Enoch Francis, Mr. Abel Francis's cousin and co-pastor at Newcastle Emlyn, published a small work in defence of Calvinism, entitled "Gair yn ei bryd," *i.e.*, "A Word in Season ;" and in 1735 Mr. Simon Thomas, minister of an Independent church in Herefordshire, published a volume in the Welsh language, "On the history of the heretics, Pelagius and Arminius, and the dangerous tendency of their doctrines."

The Antipædobaptist churches, especially those at Newcastle Emlyn and Hengoed, were kept in a sadly disturbed state for several years by Mr. A. Francis and Mr. C. Winter, and those members who had embraced their views. At length, when Mr. Francis found that his opinions would not be tolerated by the Antipædobaptists, he joined Mr. Jenkin Jones's church at Llwynrhydowen ; and when Mr. Winter and his party were expelled from Hengoed, in 1749, the peace of the churches was completely restored. Both Mr. Francis and Mr. Winter were good

and very inoffensive men ; but their brethren considered their sentiments so heretical and dangerous as to justify their expulsion from their societies. Mr. Francis died in 1743. Mr. Winter and his friends formed themselves into an Arminian Antipædobaptist church at Craigyfargod, near Merthyr Tydvil, where they erected a meeting-house in 1750. He continued to preach there till his death, in 1773. It does not appear that any other person of note among the Antipædobaptists, in this period professed Arminian sentiments.

Soon after the breaking out of the Methodist revival, some Presbyterian ministers, who previously sympathized with Mr. Jenkin Jones's views, saw a convenient opportunity to declare their sentiments more openly. Among these were Mr. Samuel Jones, of Capel Sion, Mr. Samuel Thomas, of Caermarthen, Mr. Roger Howell, of Gellyonen, and some others who might be named. Mr. Jenkin Jones died in 1742, but before his death he had the satisfaction of seeing six or seven influential ministers and their congregations brought over to embrace and profess his sentiments. He died an Arminian, but most of his surviving friends became professed Arians in the course of a few years after his death.¹

Though Nonconformity was gradually gaining ground from the Revolution to the death of Queen Anne, yet we have no account of any large additions to the churches during those years. The desolate state into which most of the congregations had been reduced, by the almost unceasing persecutions to which they were exposed from the Restoration, and the amount of the time and attention of both ministers and people, after the Revolution, which the erection of places of worship throughout the country necessarily occupied, may partly account for this: but we are inclined to attribute it chiefly to the precarious state of religious liberty during the whole of the reign of Queen Anne, and the threatening attitude of many of the highest personages in Church and State towards the Nonconformists, which encouraged the inferior clergy and the gentry, especially in the rural districts, to annoy and discourage them

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 203, 381. "Hanes Ymneillduaeth gan David Morgan," p. 147, &c.

in various ways. On the accession of George I. the dark clouds which hung over them were scattered, their liberty was confirmed, and they began, with cheerful hearts and renewed vigour, to propagate their principles in every direction. From that time to the rise of Methodism, we find the churches, throughout the length and breadth of South Wales, rapidly increasing in numbers, strength, and influence, year after year.

We are not able to give a particular account of the exact number of members added to *all* the churches during these years, but the records of as many of them as are preserved furnish us with ample proofs that they were in a very prosperous condition. The additions to the Antipædobaptist churches at Hengoed, in Glamorganshire, and Blaenau, in Monmouthshire, in two years, commencing with 1725, were about eighty, and from that time about twenty were added annually for several years to the latter.¹

Mr. Edmund Jones, referring to the state of the Independent church at Penmain, Monmouthshire, in 1710, says—“After some years’ vacancy, they chose Mr. David Williams, a Caermarthenshire man, for their pastor; who, though a good man, yet being not a popular preacher, the church dwindled in their number continually, until about the twentieth year of this century, when the Lord returned, and visited this church, as He did others in the country about. In consequence of this the church began to increase—divers joined in communion with them; amongst others, some young men, who became gifted men and preachers of the gospel, helped much to increase the church, as did also some particular preachers from other places; particularly Mr. James Davies, of Merthyr Tydvil, who at that time was very popular. It was a glorious time with the church at Penmain again; and between the year 1720 and 1739 above a hundred persons joined the congregation. This increase was not so much in the congregation at Abertillery, the Baptists prevailing in that neighbourhood, by means of the popular preaching of Mr. Enoch Francis and Mr. Morgan Griffith.”²

¹ “Hanes y Bedyddwyr,” pp. 230, 239.

² “History of the Parish of Aberystwith,” pp. 98, 99.

In the record of the church at Pantteg, near Caermarthen, we have the names of fifty persons who were admitted to the communion of that church from 1718 to 1726. The names of forty more are on the same pages of the record intermixed with these, without dates of their admission, but the probability is that they were all admitted within the same period.

The record of the church at Capel Isaac, near Llandilo, Caermarthenshire, shows that one hundred persons were admitted to the communion of that small church, in a thinly inhabited locality, during the pastorate of Mr. John Harries, from 1724 to 1746, and as many as twenty-one in the year 1735. The churches at Crugybar and Crofttycyff, which were under the pastoral care of the same minister, were increasing at the same rate in those years. The celebrated Philip Pugh and his colleagues had five Congregational churches under their care in the neighbourhoods of Lampeter and Llangeitho, in Cardiganshire, in a remarkably prosperous state at this time. In the records of those at Cilgwyn and Llwynypoid we find that there were added to them in 1728, eleven; in 1729, thirty-four; in 1730, sixteen; in 1731, thirty-six; in 1732, twenty-one; in 1733, twenty-six; in 1734, twenty-nine; in 1735, sixteen; in 1736, twenty-six. In the year 1736, Mr. Daniel Rowlands was beginning to excite considerable attention in that locality by his earnest preaching; but notwithstanding the young clergyman's popularity, the aged Nonconformist was as popular as ever. His churches continually increased. He admitted to the communion of the church at Llwynypoid in 1738, fifteen; in 1739, thirty; in 1740, thirteen; in 1741, eighteen.

There was a comparatively large number of ministers in South Wales at this time quite as noted for piety, popularity, and ministerial efficiency, as the ministers of the forementioned churches; and it is most certain that their churches were in an equally flourishing condition; but not having been able to find their records, if they are in existence, we cannot state any facts respecting their increase. Between the years 1720 and 1735, several pious, talented, and active young men entered the ministry. Among these were Mr. William Morrice, of Pembroke-

shire, Mr. Lewis Jones, of Bridgend, Mr. Edmund Jones and Mr. Miles Harries, of Pontypool, Mr. Lewis Rees, of Llanbrynmair, &c. These young ministers were revivalists in the fullest sense of the term. A religious awakening had been actually commenced by their instrumentality as early as the year 1730, which was extending year after year, so that Mr. Howell Harries and his coadjutors had only to blow into a flame the fire already kindled.¹

But while the state of things was thus encouraging in South Wales, it was quite different in the North. The counties of North Wales had been blessed from the earliest days of Nonconformity with the services of several of the most efficient ministers in their respective generations, such as Mr. Walter Cradock, Mr. Vavasor Powell, Mr. Morgan Lloyd, Mr. Henry Maurice, Mr. Ambrose Mostyn, Mr. Hugh Owen, Mr. James Owen, &c.; but after all, neither religion nor Nonconformity took any general hold of the population till some years after the rise of Methodism. There were only ten congregations, as we have seen, in the six counties in 1715, and seven of those very small. It does not appear that their number had increased during the ensuing twenty years, but most of them were beginning to revive about 1734, under the powerful ministry of Mr. Lewis Rees, who settled at Llanbrynmair in that year.

This low and declining condition of the Nonconforming interest in North Wales may partly be accounted for by the fact, that only a very small number of the *natives* of that part of the Principality had been called to the ministry in any age from the Restoration of Charles II. to the middle of the eighteenth century. The churches had their supplies of ministers from South Wales, and the persecutors would naturally treat strangers with greater cruelty than they would have treated their own countrymen. Natives of the South also had to labour under another disadvantage in the North, on account of the great difference of their dialect from that of their hearers. The dialects of the North and the South greatly differ (and much more so then than in the present day) in the

¹ Jones's "History of the Parish of Aberystroth," p. 103.

accentuation and pronunciation of many words, and even the same words are used in quite different senses. For instance, the word *gwiriondeb* in South Wales means *innocence* or *harmlessness*, while in the North it only means *mental imbecility*. In consequence of this difference, preachers from the South were to some extent unintelligible to a congregation of North Wallians; and owing to the different acceptations of the same words, they would occasionally say some things to which their hearers would naturally attach the most ridiculous meanings.

Mr. Baddy, of Denbigh, in an application to the managers of the Presbyterian Fund for assistance to educate a young man for the ministry, dated March 12, 1727, refers to the disadvantage arising from the difference of dialects in the following terms:—"North Wales is but slenderly provided with ministers; and not one youth, that I remember, in all North Wales for above thirty years, has had any assistance or allowance from the funds to perfect his studies at the academy. We apply ourselves to the South Wales ministers for a supply, and cannot get any. We want two ministers or three at present; and of those few we have, two are South Wales men. They, differing much in their dialect from us, are not so acceptable or useful, and upon their first coming are discouraged, and so go off." That hindrance to the general usefulness of ministers has long since been removed by more intercourse between North and South; and the almost universal cultivation of Welsh literature throughout the Principality.

Historians, one after another, have been misled by the account given by Mr. Charles, of Bala, in the "*Drysorfa*" for 1799, of the weakness of Nonconformity in North Wales, and the prevalence of irreligion and superstition there as late as the year 1740. They have taken for granted that that graphic and telling description of the state of things in most parts of the North was applicable to the *whole* Principality, which was a most unfounded assumption, quite as absurd as if a person assumed that the majority of the population of Ireland are Protestants because it happens to be so in some districts of the province of Ulster. It is well known that North Wales, in respect of both area and population, consti-

tutes only a little more than one-third of the Principality, including Monmouthshire ; and at that time its Nonconforming inhabitants scarcely amounted to one-twentieth of the whole body of Welsh Nonconformists. Having assumed that Mr. Charles's description of the irreligious state of North Wales was applicable to every part of the Principality, Judge Johnes confidently writes—"Properly speaking, the history of Methodism is the history of Dissent in Wales."¹ It is not probable that the learned gentleman would have ever written such a sentence had he been better acquainted with the subject ; but we can hardly blame him for his ignorance, having ourselves entertained the same erroneous view for many years.

It seems that the early Methodists, either from prejudice against their Nonconforming brethren, or a desire to claim to themselves the undivided honour of having evangelized the Principality, designedly misrepresented or ignored the labours of all other sects. No one at the time considering it worth his while publicly to contradict their frequent and bold assertions, they are now referred to as undoubted facts. Mr. W. Williams, of Pantycelyn, in his "Elegy on the Death of Mr. Howell Harries," printed in 1773, asserts, without any qualifying remark, that all Wales was enveloped in thick darkness, and that all its ministers of every denomination were asleep when Mr. Harries began to exhort. Such a sweeping charge so irritated the venerable Edmund Jones, of Pontypool, that he wrote the following severe remark in his Diary for 1773 :—"Mr. William Williams, the Methodist clergyman, in his 'Elegy for Mr. Howell Harries,' plainly saith and plainly sings that neither priest nor presbyter was awake when Mr. Howell Harries came out to exhort. A shameless untruth printed ; for there were some clergymen awake before him, as Mr. Griffith Jones, of Llandowror ; Mr. Thomas Jones, of Cwmiau ; and many Dissenting ministers, as Mr. John Thomas, in Caernarvonshire ; Mr. Williams, of Tredustan, and Mr. Morgan, of Llanavan, in Brecknockshire ; Mr. Vavasor Griffiths, in Radnorshire ; Mr. Palmer, of Henllan, and Mr. W. Morrice, in Pembrokeshire ; Mr. Philip Pugh, in Cardiganshire ; Mr.

¹ "Causes of Dissent in Wales," p. 9.

James Davies, of Merthyr, in Glamorganshire; and it was I that brought Mr. Harries to exhort in Monmouthshire. It is a wonder how that man should say such a thing who himself was born of and educated among Dissenters. If the Methodists will not give over hard censuring as they do, God will by degrees desert them, and then they will become weak and of little use."

It appears that most of the Antipædobaptists of this period were Millenarians. At the Association held at Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, May 30 and 31, 1732, the question was proposed, "Whether it were necessary and profitable to preach the reign of Christ upon the earth a thousand years?" The reply was, "That the Association in general looked upon that to be a truth, and under a blessing it might be profitable, when done with good light and understanding, and with caution."¹ Mr. John Harries, the pastor of the church at Blaenau, in 1725, translated and published a volume on the subject, written in English by Mr. William Alleine.

There was a considerable number of Friends in different parts of the Principality at this time, especially in the counties of Merioneth, Radnor, Pembroke, and Monmouth. Several respectable and wealthy families belonged to their society, and the members universally had the character of being upright and most inoffensive people. In this respect they greatly excelled the founders of the society in Wales, who, as we have seen, were generally insolent and intolerably annoying to their neighbours of different persuasions. These good people were still troubled by the clergy, as their forefathers had been, because they could not conscientiously pay tithes and church-rates. About the year 1736, "A Brief Account of many of the Prosecutions of the people called Quakers in the Exchequer, Ecclesiastical, and other Courts," was published. We find in it the names of several Welsh Friends, and a description of their severe sufferings. In 1739, some clergymen of the diocese of St. David's published an examination of those portions of the "Brief Account" which reflected on their conduct. They attempt to disprove some

¹ Thomas's "History of the Welsh Association," p. 45.

of the statements, but they leave untouched the disgraceful facts, that they had a hand in the prosecution of their in-offensive neighbours. Hundreds of the Welsh clergy of that age could not refer to a single *soul* that they had been the means of converting from the error of his way; but many could refer to *bodies* incarcerated, and families ruined by them for non-payment of church-rates, tithes, and other strange claims.

The history of this period will be further illustrated by the following biographical sketches of some of its most eminent ministers.

HUGH OWEN.

“He was a candidate for the ministry when the Bartholomew Act passed, and about that time removed from Oxford to London. He soon after fixed in Merionethshire, his native county, where he lived upon a little estate of his own, called Bronycludwr, near Llanegryn, and preached the gospel to the poor, ignorant people gratis. He was a burning and shining light in this obscure corner; a bright star, that moved in a large orb. He had five or six places where he used to preach in this county, some of them twenty miles distant, and nearly as many in Montgomeryshire, of which some were about thirty miles from his habitation. He also sometimes preached in Caernarvonshire, and other parts. He performed his circuit in about three months, and then began again. His preaching was very affectionate and moving. Great numbers of people attended his ministry, and were much impressed by it; his indefatigable labours much impaired his health, as he often rode in the night, and in cold rains over the mountains, scarcely allowing himself necessary food. He rarely ate any flesh, and avoided all strong liquors: his principal food was milk, to which he had used himself by lodging in poor houses, where they had nothing else, and only beds of straw. He was a primitive apostolical Christian; eminently meek and humble, esteeming himself the least of all the ministers of Jesus Christ. He used to say he envied no man’s gifts, but desired faithfully to improve his own little

talent for the service of his Lord. He was tender of grieving any, and, though strict in his own opinions, was candid towards those who differed from him. He often said 'he valued no man for his opinion, or his adherence to this or that party, but for what he saw of the grace of God in him.' His unblemished and exemplary deportment procured him the esteem of the gentlemen of the country, to several of whom he was nearly allied.

"He had many remarkable deliverances in answer to prayer. As he was once coming home, in a very dark night, he lost his way, and found himself in a dangerous place; in this extremity he alighted from his horse, and prayed to God to direct him. Before he had done praying, the heavens cleared over his head, so that he plainly perceived his way, and escaped the danger. Another time, going to preach in a frosty, snowy season, he was benighted on the hills, and a sudden storm arose, which drove the snow so violently in his face that the horse could not go forward. He therefore let him go as he would, till he perceived himself in danger of the bogs, so that it was not safe to ride any farther. After he had committed himself to God by prayer, he left his horse to shift for himself, and walked in his boots in a deep snow till midnight, when he was so spent, and so affected with the cold, that he despaired of life. Providentially, in a little time he came to a cow-house, into which he attempted to enter; but when he got to the door he found it barred within. He scrambled about for above an hour, trying to get in, but to no purpose. At length, when all hope was gone, he discovered a hole at one end of the place, and with much difficulty got in that way, and lay between the cattle till morning, when he crept out again, and seeing a house not far off he went to it, and knocked at the door. The master of the house arose, and let him in, when he found his hair and beard frozen, his hands benumbed, his clothes stiff with frost and snow, and himself scarcely able to speak. He made a good fire, gave him some hot milk, and put him into a warm bed, where he lay some hours. He then got up so well refreshed, that he went that morning to the meeting place, and preached without any sensible prejudice.

He died in the year 1699, aged 62. Mr. James Owen, of Oswestry, at his desire, preached his funeral sermon, but was forbid mentioning him in it. All who knew him esteemed him an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile."

His grandson, Mr. Hugh Farmer, of Walthamstow, has furnished Mr. Palmer, the editor of the "Nonconformist Memorial," with the following additional account of his venerable ancestor:—"His character was strongly marked by compassion and charity. The numerous poor in his own neighbourhood, and under his extensive pastoral inspection, he constantly visited and relieved. When in his travels he met with persons suffering greatly by the severity of the weather, for want of proper clothing, he would spare from his own person, not without some hazard, what their pressing necessities seemed to require. At a time when the sweating sickness carried off great numbers, and the infected were in want of proper assistance, he diligently attended them, and condescended to perform, even for the meanest, any necessary service. With respect to the impression which his unaffected piety and goodness made upon others, the following particulars are remarkable:—When the under sheriff of Merionethshire apprehended him at his own house, in the reign of James II., he readily consented to go with him, and only begged leave first to pray with his family. This he was allowed to do. When he had done, the officer, being deeply affected with his devotion, said he would now have nothing to say to him, and went away, leaving his prisoner at liberty. He was once confined at Lord Powis's, at Powis Castle, but was treated with remarkable kindness during his confinement. His Lordship, though a Papist, on hearing him pray, said to his priest, 'Surely this is a good Christian!' and on his discharge, engaged him to come to Powis Castle every Christmas.

"He left behind him a letter of advice to his people, which he styled his *Last Legacy*, of which the following is the substance:—Beware of worldliness, for I fear, lest the world, like a canker, should eat up all the good that is in many, and leave their souls like dry shells. Set yourselves against secret pride, and take care to keep down every proud and high conceited

thought of yourselves upon any account. Set yourselves to practise the great duty of self-denial ; yea, rejoice in opportunities of humbling yourselves to the very dust for the sake of Jesus ; striving to be forward to forgive, forget, and pass by whatever anybody may do against you : yea, apply yourselves first for peace. Beware of the proud and high temper that says, 'It is they that offended, and not I ; they should come to me, and not I to them.' These are but the effects of pride, and more of love to ourselves than to the Lord Jesus Christ and His ways. Having given to the officers and elderly members of the church a hint concerning the prudence and moderation to be used by them to prevent disputes about baptism, he observes that such disputes had occasioned a great breach at Wrexham, to the dishonour of God, and the contempt of religion ; and that those who had engaged in them had acknowledged to him that they had lost the presence of God, which they had formerly enjoyed, and that there was a stop put to the work of conversion among them—'I press you to this,' says he, 'because it should be the desire and design of every member to increase the kingdom of Christ, to have the image of Christ, and not their own opinion, stamped upon the souls of men. If I have the image of Christ stamped on my soul, I shall be sure to go to heaven ; but I may enjoy both sorts of baptism, and go to hell after all.'"¹

Mr. Owen was succeeded by his worthy son, but that promising young minister was cut off in the prime of life, within a year after his father. The following account of him has been preserved :—"In the year 1700, June 27, died Mr. John Owen, son of that very holy, humble, and laborious minister, Mr. Hugh Owen, of Merionethshire, a burning and shining light in a dark, cold, and barren country ; one eminently self-denying, and mortified to the things of this world. His son John was grave and serious from his childhood ; he was a student under Mr. Frankland, and after some years spent with him as a pupil was chosen to be his assistant ; and whilst he was so, his example and endeavours were of very good use to several young men in the family. He had made great improvements in re-

¹ Palmer's "Nonconformist Memorial," vol. iii. pp. 490-494.

ligion and learning before he left that place, and entered upon the ministry with great seriousness and good acceptance, and chose to spend his time and strength in the same place where his father lived and died. He was, I think, the only Dissenting minister in Merionethshire. Some occasions leading him to Salop, he fell sick there, at Mr. Orton's house (grandfather of Mr. Job Orton), and in nine days' time died (being about thirty years of age), to the great grief of all his acquaintance, and to the unspeakable loss of the church of God. Mr. Henry was sent for to his funeral, and preached on that sad occasion at Mr. Jones's meeting-house, from Heb. xiii. 17. The night before he died, Mr. James Owen, being with him, expressed his hopes and desires that God would spare him in his great usefulness in Wales, where he would be so much missed. He meekly replied, 'It would be a proud thought to think that God has any need of us.' Great lamentation was made for him, and not without reason, for there were few young men likeminded."¹

After the death of Mr. John Owen, Mr. Edward Kenrick, who had married one of his sisters, and had the estate of Bronycludwr for his wife's portion, took to the pastoral oversight of those congregations in Merionethshire which his father-in-law had gathered at Bronycludwr, Dolgelly, Bala, &c. He was ordained August 17, 1702, by Mr. James Owen, Mr. Matthew Henry, and others. Mr. Kenrick, though a very good man, does not appear to have been so successful and acceptable as a minister as his excellent predecessors; however, some years before his death, which occurred in 1742, he had the pleasure of seeing the cause reviving, and many added to the churches, chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Lewis Rees, Mr. Jenkin Morgan, and other revivalists from South Wales.²

REES PROTHEROE, OR PRYTHERCH.

This excellent person resided at Ystradwalter, near the town of Llandovery, Caermarthenshire, where he kept a celebrated

¹ William's "Life of Matthew Henry," pp. 341, 342.

² Thompson's MSS.

school for above forty years. He was not in the ministry when the Act of Uniformity came in force in 1662, but he was a sufferer then in the capacity of a schoolmaster. Some years after, he began to exercise his gifts as a preacher of the gospel, notwithstanding the fierceness of persecution, and long before his death became one of the most eminent and extensively useful ministers in the Principality. He was chosen by the Nonconformists in and around Llandovery, in the year 1675, to be their pastor, but owing to the dangers of the times, he was not publicly ordained till the year 1688. His congregation for a long time, during the reigns of the Stuarts, had to meet for worship in a large cave, called Castellcraigwyddon, about five miles to the east from Llandovery. He did not confine his service to his own congregation, but often travelled far and near to preach the gospel. After the death of Mr. Henry Maurice, in 1682, he had for some years the sole pastoral care of all the Nonconforming churches in Brecknockshire, and though assisted by a number of teaching elders, his own labours must have been excessive. A little before his death, he told his friends that his life had been a life of wonder. The day that he fell ill, he had a meeting in his own house; and after he had finished the service, he took his leave of the people in a familiar way. He told one of them that he was not well, and desired him to help him upstairs to his study, where his bed was; upon which he laid himself down, and spoke no more. That day was the 25th of January, 1699. He was born, ordained, and died, on the 25th of January.

By his death the Welsh churches lost one of their most valuable ministers, and the most eminent tutor, after the death of Mr. Samuel Jones, in South Wales. Many of his pupils entered the ministry and other professions, several of whom were good scholars, and became useful men in church and state. As a preacher, he was affectionate and awakening, and his ministry was eminently owned of God for the conversion of souls. He was highly respected by all that knew him, as a gentleman, a scholar, and a minister of the gospel. Dr. Thomas, Bishop of St. David's, always treated him with the greatest respect, and made him considerable offers if he would have conformed.

Mr. Protheroe left in manuscript, ready for the press, a very valuable work in the Welsh language. It was published in 1714, under the title, "Gemau Doethineb," *i.e.*, "The Gems of Wisdom," with a preface by Mr. William Evans, tutor of the Academy at Caermarthen, and one of the author's former pupils. The work consists of seven hundred select sentences, similar to those in Mason's "Remains," with several short essays against the most prevalent sins and superstitious customs of those times. This peerless small volume has passed through several editions, and is one of the best uninspired books in the Welsh language. The name of Rees Prytherch is still a household word in South Wales.¹

It is worthy of notice that three of the most celebrated characters connected with the religion and the religious literature of Wales have lived and died at or near the town of Llandovery, in three successive generations; Rees Prichard, Rees Prytherch, and William Williams. The Songs of the first, the Gems of the second, and the Hymns of the third, will live as long as the language of the Cymry.

JAMES OWEN.

Having already had repeated occasions to record many interesting incidents in the life of this celebrated minister, the following sketch must therefore be brief.

James Owen was born November 1, 1654, at Bryn, in the parish of Abernant, near Caermarthen. He was the second son of John Owen, a person of repute and noted integrity, and one that took particular care to give his children a pious education. Both he and his wife were zealous church people, and yet their large family of nine children became all decided and conscientious Nonconformists; of whom three—David, James, and Charles—were ministers. James, after having spent some time at a country school, was removed to one Mr. Picton, a Quaker, and an able scholar, who taught youth in Caermarthen Castle; from whence he was removed to the free school of that town, then under the care of Mr. David Phillips, who fitted him for University learning: such was his proficiency there, that

¹ Palmer, vol. iii. p. 500. Evan's preface to "Gemau Doethineb."

he soon became the particular favourite of his tutor, who looked upon him as a most promising youth. He was always observed, even while at inferior schools, to be of a solid and studious temper. It was usual with him to sit up late at his book, not only to prepare his task for the ensuing day, but to review and rivet more firmly in his mind the performances of the day past. This was looked upon by many as a sure presage of that eminence at which he afterwards arrived, even in the opinion of his very enemies.

From the early age of thirteen play and childish diversions with him lost all their charms; and he refrained from them altogether. His thirst after learning was so great, that he applied to it with the greatest avidity; knowing that there is no fruit in autumn where there has been no budding in the spring. It was about this time that he first heard a Dissenting minister preach; the text was Malachi iv. 1. The deep impression which the sermon made upon his mind issued in his conversion, and he became a very remarkable instance of early piety. Having finished his classical studies, he went for instruction in academical learning to Mr. Samuel Jones, of Brynllwarch, Glamorganshire. Here he went through the whole course of philosophy, was a very close student, and so remarkably improved his time as to receive from his learned tutor the character of an indefatigable student. He would also often add, that this pupil was more ready to learn than he was to teach, and that he knew no insuperable difficulties in the pursuit of knowledge.

After having finished his studies at Brynllwarch, he spent some time in the instruction of youth; and then went on a visit to his godfather, Mr. James Howell, a minister of the Established Church, where he stayed sixteen months. Mr. Howell did all in his power to persuade him to conform, but without success. He studied the point with real impartiality, being very solicitous to find out the truth, and equally willing to be determined by its force either way; but upon the whole his doubts increased, and he became a confirmed Nonconformist. His Nonconformity was with him a real matter of conscience, and the effect of the most mature deliberation.

He had no external inducements to join the Nonconformists. His parents were rigid Conformists, and he saw all the preferments engrossed by the Church, and that the Nonconformists were a company of ridiculed, reproached, and oppressed people. He could promise to himself nothing but scorn and shame, poverty and prisons, in joining them ; but as their way appeared to him to be the most agreeable to Scripture, he resolved to follow it.

His perplexing doubts being effectually dissipated, he resumed his studies with his wonted eagerness, and now made them all preparatory to the sacred office. His abilities for the ministry were very considerable ; nor was he less remarkable for his serious and undissembled piety, which soon attracted the veneration of all good men, especially the Nonconformists, among whom he was now admitted to preach as a candidate. He entered upon that work when he was very young, and when there was a vigorous enforcing of the penal laws against Protestant Nonconformists. Yet the certain prospects of bonds and imprisonments in the exercise of his ministry did not at all terrify him ; his terror proceeded rather from a sense of the importance of the work in which he was now going to engage. He began to preach at Swansea, in Glamorganshire, as an assistant to the apostolic Stephen Hughes. His rare abilities soon attracted notice, and proceedings were immediately commenced against him in the Ecclesiastical Court. About this time Mr. Henry Maurice paid a very particular attention to him. Seeing that he was in danger every day of being cast into prison, and that the service of such a promising young man was greatly needed in Caernarvonshire, his native county, he urgently pressed him to go there. Mr. Stephen Hughes, under those peculiar circumstances, reluctantly consented to part with his highly valued young friend. When Mr. Owen reached North Wales, he took up his residence at Bodwell, near Pwllheli. His ministry proved remarkably acceptable there, but his usefulness in a short time so excited the rage of persecutors, that his friends, within about nine months after his coming among them, in order to save his valuable life, thought advisable to convey him by night to Bronycludwr, in

Merionethshire, the residence of the excellent Hugh Owen. He stayed at that place for some time, and was earnestly invited to settle there as Mr. Owen's assistant, but the violence of persecution compelled him to leave.

In November, 1676, he had a call to Swiney, near Oswestry, where he settled as chaplain to Mrs. Baker, of that place, a lady of eminent piety; and he preached to a congregation of serious people in and about Oswestry, who had for thirty years enjoyed the labours of the worthy Rowland Nevet, who died December, 1675. After he had preached for some time as a probationer with acceptance, he was solemnly set apart for the ministry in October, 1677, and had this honourable testimony given him by his ordainers:—"That he was a young man well qualified for that great work; and that they believed he would be an eminent instrument to propagate the gospel, do good to souls, and advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus." All which was afterwards confirmed and verified.

On the 17th of November, 1679, he was married at Oswestry to Mrs. Sarah George, who appears to have been a person of eminent piety, and every way worthy of such a husband. By her he had seven children, only two of whom survived him. She died in January, 1692.

About the time of his marriage, the meeting which used to be at Swiney was removed to Oswestry, where he himself appears to have then taken up his abode, and where he continued above twenty years labouring in the word and doctrine, with a very small congregation and but little encouragement. But if he did not succeed so well in the town of Oswestry, he had the pleasure of being instrumental in gathering several congregations in the adjacent parts of North Wales. His settlement here brought him into an intimate acquaintance with the venerable Philip Henry, who greatly valued him, and was as greatly valued by him. Him he consulted on all occasions as a father and friend, and he was in many ways helpful to his improvement, especially by confirming him in those principles of moderation for which Mr. Henry was so eminently distinguished.

In the year 1693 he married his second wife, who was the

widow of Alderman R. Edwards, of Oswestry. She died in August, 1699. August 12, 1700, he was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Hough, widow of Mr. John Hough, of Chester, and daughter of John Wynne, Esq., of Coperlemy, in Flintshire.

In 1696 he had a pressing invitation to remove to a wealthy, liberal, and large congregation in Manchester, which he declined. In 1699 he had another invitation from the same town, and one also from Shrewsbury. At the earnest recommendation of the ministers of the county he reluctantly complied with the latter, and removed early in the year 1700. His principal reason for preferring Shrewsbury to Manchester was its being nearer to Wales. He always felt it to be his duty and privilege to do all the good in his power to his fellow-countrymen. A more patriotic man never lived.

Soon after his removal to Shrewsbury, if not before he had left Oswestry, he set up an academy for the instruction of candidates for the ministry; and the benefit of the Welsh churches seems to have been the chief object he had in view in doing so. Several Welsh ministers were educated under him; amongst others, his nephew, Mr. Jeremiah Owen, and Mr. Thomas Perrot, afterwards tutor at Caermarthen. His qualifications for the responsible office of tutor were of the highest order. In addition to his seraphic piety, ministerial efficiency, gentlemanly deportment, and punctual habits, he occupied the first rank among his learned contemporaries as a scholar.

Beside an accurate knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and the Hebrew, he is said to have been no mean proficient also in the Arabic, Syriac, Saxon, and French languages, not to mention his thorough and critical acquaintance with the English and Welsh tongues. In divinity and ecclesiastical history likewise, as well as logic, and other arts and sciences, he had confessedly attained to eminence.

His studious habits, close, intense, and incessant application to literary pursuits, had brought on, at an early period of his life, that dreadful disorder, the stone. He had often had most violent attacks of it for thirty years, but at length they proved fatal. He died on the 8th of April, 1706, aged 52 years, and

was buried on the 11th, in St. Chad's, Shrewsbury. Mr. Matthew Henry preached his funeral sermon. He was confined to his bed for only a week. In the afternoon of the Lord's day, April 1st, he preached from those words—"The just shall live by faith," and that was the last sermon he ever preached. On his death-bed he expressed his satisfaction that he had lived, and was then dying, in his Nonconformity. Mr. Henry, in his funeral sermon, thus describes the heavenly frame in which he closed his valuable life on earth:—"His solemn farewell to his children and pupils, the good counsel he gave them, the blessing with which he blessed them in the name of the Lord, and the testimony he bore with his dying lips to the good ways of God wherein he had walked, I hope they will never forget; and that particularly they and we ever remember and practise what he said, after many other good counsels, should be the last and great thing he would recommend to them, and that was humility. 'It is,' said he, 'one of the brightest ornaments of a young minister to be humble.' The words of God, which he had made his songs in the house of his pilgrimage, were his delightful entertainment when his tabernacle was in taking down. How pleasantly did he triumph then, in the words of blessed Paul—"I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep what I have committed unto him against that day."

"When he was asked in his illness whether he would have some of his friends sent for to keep him company, he answered—"My fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ; and he that is not satisfied with that company, does not deserve it." Another time, being asked would he not be glad to see his brother from Warrington, for whom he had an entire affection, he replied—"I know no man after the flesh; my elder Brother is in heaven, who is the first-born among many brethren." Thus he seemed to be taken up *with* heaven, before he was taken up *to* heaven.

"Coming to himself again once after a fit, in which those about him thought he was departing, he asked, 'Have I not finished yet? I thought I should have finished now.' Thus did he, with the sucking child, play upon the hole of the asp,

and, with the weaned child, put his hand upon the cockatrice's den; knowing that death itself cannot hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain.

"Overhearing his dear and affectionate yoke-fellow bemoaning herself, and saying, '*O this is a sad day!*' being the Lord's day, and some few hours before he died, he replied, with some show of resentment, 'A sad day do you call it? no, it is not a sad day, I thank God; it is a comfortable day to me.' And it was observed that he departed with a smiling countenance.

"As he found himself drawing near to his end, he was ever and anon lifting up his heart to God, in such devout and pious breathings as these: 'Blessed be God for Jesus Christ. How long, Lord, holy and true? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.' And not long before he departed, 'Now let the blessed angels come and do their office.'

"Thus, my brethren, thus he finished his course; this was the end of his conversation. In such a heavenly temper as this he removed to the world of spirits, as one who was already acquainted with that world, and longed to be better acquainted with it. Blessed be God, who thus crowned His own work in him, and brought forth the top stone of that blessed building with shoutings; and let us cry, Grace, grace to it."

Mr. Owen was the author of several works in both the Welsh and the English languages. The following is a list of most, if not all of them:—In Welsh—1. *Trugaredd a Barn, i.e., Mercy and Judgment*, 1687. 2. *Infant Baptism from Heaven*, 1693. 3. A small pamphlet on the duties of Ministers and People probably published in 1693. 4. A translation of the Assembly's Catechism, 1701. 5. A reply to Keach and others, on Baptism, 1701. His English works are—1. *A Plea for Scripture Ordination*, proving the validity of ordination by presbyters, without diocesan Bishops, 1694. 2. *A Thanksgiving Sermon*, on occasion of the deliverance of King William from the Assassination Plot, 1696. 3. *A defence of his Plea against Mr. T. Gipps*, 1697. 4. *Remarks on a Sermon of the same Mr. Gipps*, 1697. 5. *A further Vindication of the Dissenters from the same gentleman's unjust accusations*, 1699. 6. A

reply to the said Mr. Gipps' letter to a friend, 1699. 7. An introduction to Mr. Delme's method of preaching, 1701. 8. Moderation still a Virtue; in defence of occasional conformity, 1703. 9. Moderation still a virtue, 1704. 10. The History of the Consecration of Altars, Temples, and Churches, 1706. 11. *Vindiciæ Britannicæ*; in answer to the Bishop of Worcester. 12. History of Image Worship, 1709. 13. History of Ordination, completed and published by his brother, Dr. Charles Owen. 14. The account of the Welsh ejected Ministers, in Calamy was also written by Mr. Owen.

Mr. Owen's eldest brother, David, was pastor of the church at Henllan, Caermarthenshire, from 1696 to 1710. He died on the 7th of October, in that year, aged 59. Of his early history we know nothing. He was succeeded at Henllan by his son, Jeremiah Owen, who, as we have seen, studied under his uncle at Shrewsbury. His pastorate at Henllan was very short, not more than four or five years. In his reply to Mr. Matthias Maurice he refers to his dismissal. Whatever was the cause of it, he acquits the church from any blame in the matter, and attributes it wholly to himself. He was teaching a school in London in 1718; a minister at Petworth from 1721 to 1726; at Barnet from 1726 to 1732; at Princes Risborough, Bucks, from 1733 to 1744; and from there he emigrated to America, where he died. We have not been able to ascertain the time of his death. This is all we know of his history. He was a most clever and talented man, but it seems that he was deficient in either morality or prudence. Besides his forementioned remarks on Mr. M. Maurice's account of the controversy at Henllan, he also published, in 1733, a most valuable essay in the Welsh language, on the duty of churches to pray for their ministers. He published several pamphlets in the English language as well.

Charles Owen, D.D., was Mr. James Owen's youngest brother and biographer. He was for about fifty years pastor of the Presbyterian congregation at Warrington, and was also the tutor of an academy there. Besides publishing and completing some works which his brother had left in manuscript, he also wrote his life, several controversial tracts, and a very valuable

volume, entitled "The Wonders of Redeeming Love." He died at an advanced age in the beginning of the year 1746.

DANIEL WILLIAMS, D.D.

Though this eminent person never exercised his ministry in Wales, yet being a Welshman, and having done more by his princely bequests to support the Nonconforming ministry and education in the Principality than any other individual from his days to the present time, he demands a respectful notice in a history of Welsh Nonconformity.

He was born at Wrexham, in Denbighshire, in 1643 or 1644. As the pious and popular Morgan Lloyd was the pastor at Wrexham during the first fifteen years of Dr. Williams's life, we may take for granted that he was indebted to him for a great part of his early instruction, in the principles of Evangelical religion and Nonconformity. He was seriously disposed from his youth, and was one of the first of the rising generation who entered the ministry after the ejection in 1662. He says of himself, "That from five years old he had no employment but his studies; and that by nineteen he was regularly admitted a preacher." He openly confessed himself a Nonconformist at a time when he could have no prospect whatever of any worldly gain or honour by it, but quite the contrary.

When he had spent a few years in preaching, as an occasional supply, in several parts of England, where he was continually exposed to persecution, Providence very seasonably opened his way to a sphere of usefulness and comparative safety in Ireland. The pious Lady Wilbraham, of Weston, in Shropshire, whom he occasionally visited, introduced him to the Countess of Meath, who appointed him her chaplain. Some time after he went over to Ireland, he was invited to the pastoral office over the congregation which met in Wood Street, Dublin. He discharged the duties of his office here with unusual acceptance for nearly twenty years. While in Dublin, he married his first wife, who was not only a lady of distinguished wisdom and piety, but of an honourable family and considerable wealth.

Owing to the threatening state of things in Ireland, in 1687

he returned to England, and took up his residence in London. His talents, activity, and wealth soon raised him to a conspicuous position among the Nonconformists of the metropolis. In the year 1688 he was chosen pastor of a numerous congregation in Hand Alley, Bishopsgate Street, in which office he continued till his death, which occurred January 26, 1716.

For many years he was one of the leading men, among the metropolitan ministers, in every public movement. The violent agitation occasioned by his writings against the Ultra-Calvinistic, or Antinomian views of Dr. Crisp, is so well known, that we need not give any account of it. He was most unchristianly treated by his opponents in that controversy, which lasted for seven years, but he bore everything with becoming equanimity and courage, and his congregation adhered to him with unshaken fidelity and affection.

Principal Carstairs sent him from Scotland, in 1709, a diploma of D.D., inclosed in a silver box. He was twice married, and had large fortunes with both wives; but though elevated from obscurity and comparative poverty to the highest honours and affluence, a transition, which to many has proved fatal, only increased his zeal for the interests of religion, and the ardency of his desire to do good.

Having no family, he bequeathed the bulk of his property for various religious and benevolent purposes, a considerable amount of which is appropriated to the promotion of religion and education among the Nonconformists in Wales. In the introduction to his will he expresses himself thus:—"As to my worldly estate, wherewith God has so wonderfully blessed me, and what I have used with moderation as to myself, that I might be the more useful to others, both in my life and after my death, I dispose thereof as follows, &c." The benefits conferred exclusively upon Wales were the following:—

To the Rev. Mr. Kenrick, of Wrexham, and his successors per annum	£ 10
Towards teaching 25 poor children at Wrexham	15
Ditto, 20 each at six other places in North Wales	48

Support of students at Caermarthen, under Mr. William Evans and his successors	£ 10
One-eighth of surplus in the hands of the Trustees towards apprenticing poor boys, to be elected from the Welsh schools supported by the Trust ¹	Fluctuating.
One-third of surplus to assist educated ministers, of sound judgment and sober principles—two-thirds for ministers in North Wales, and one-third for those in South Wales	Fluctuating.

Mrs. Roberts, of Wrexham, the testator's sister and heir-at-law, disputed the Will, on the ground that the interlineations in the Will and the codicil thereto had not been attested. She did that, not from a covetous desire to appropriate the property to her own private use, but from a conviction that her brother had not left a sufficient portion of his large estate for the exclusive benefit of his native country. She therefore generously proposed to give up whatever claim she might have in the property, on condition that the Trustees would give £60 a year more than the Will specified for charitable purposes in Wales; under these circumstances, the Trustees, having obtained the sanction of the Court of Chancery, engaged for themselves and their successors to pay Mrs. Roberts, for her life, and after her death to such persons as she would appoint, £60 per annum, out of the rents and profits of the Testator's estate. This annuity of £60 has accordingly been paid ever since to Trustees in North Wales, who distribute the sum among a certain number of ministers in that part of the Principality.

Dr. Williams's Trustees have always acted under the direction of the High Court of Chancery. Under various orders of the Court, the sums appropriated to the education of poor children in Wales have been raised from time to time. The payments made exclusively to Wales at the present time are as follows:—

¹ The apprentice fees have been discontinued, and the money applied other benevolent purposes of the Trust.

	per annum	£
School at Wrexham		55
Endowed School for Girls at Dolgelly	„	300
Caermarthen College not exceeding	„	100
North Wales Ministers about	„	180
Minister at Wrexham	„	10
South Wales Ministers	„	90
Roberts's Trustees for Ministers in North Wales	„	60
The Glasgow and Divinity Scholarships are equally open to Wales as to England.		

In addition to these sums, the Trustees make annual grants of Bibles and other religious books for distribution in the Principality, and also certain sums of money to the widows of ministers; so that Wales annually receives from Dr. Williams's bequests a sum not much under eleven hundred pounds. The library in Grafton Street, Gower Street, near University College, London, his valuable works in six octavo volumes, and his various charities, will perpetuate and endear the memory of this benevolent Welshman to the friends of religion, education, and literature, from generation to generation.

DANIEL PHILLIPS.

He was a native of Caermarthenshire, and was educated for the ministry under Mr. Samuel Jones, Brynllwarch. In his youth he was wild and thoughtless. His conversion took place under the following circumstances:—One Lord's day, he and one of his vain companions, to gratify their curiosity, agreed to go to hear a sermon. At the close of the service his companion said to him—"Now let us go to such and such a place, to have some enjoyment!" "My friend," replied he, "have you not heard what the preacher said about sin and its dreadful consequences? I dare not go on any farther in my wicked ways!" From that day he parted for ever with his associates in sin, and cast his lot among the despised and persecuted people of God. His piety and extraordinary gifts soon attracted the notice of his religious friends, who urged

him to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry. After studying for some years under Mr. Jones, he received a pressing invitation to go to North Wales, and settle as pastor of the Nonconforming church at Pwllheli. He complied with it, and settled there in 1684; but owing to the violence of persecution, he was not publicly ordained till 1688. He took up his abode at Gwynfryn, a respectable farmhouse near the town of Pwllheli. Soon after he married the widow of the celebrated Henry Maurice, and by his marriage became the proprietor of that farm.

Such was the prejudice and enmity of the people of that country then to religion and religious men, that he could not get a servant in the whole country, but such reprobate characters as no one else would have employed. He was at one time necessitated to take into his service a rude and unruly person, who would often curse and swear in his hearing. Mr. Phillips being in the habit of retiring to his room for private prayer, curiosity one day induced this servant to go to the door to ascertain what he was doing there. Looking through the keyhole, she saw him on his knees, and the big tears trickling down his face. Daringly impious as she was, that sight overpowered her, and from that hour she became a changed character. Some time after, she joined the church, and became a consistent and useful member.

Mr. Phillips was a very active and courageous person. Notwithstanding the persecuting spirit of the people, as soon as the Act of Toleration came in force, he availed himself of its provisions, and recorded a house for preaching in the town of Caernarvon, and two or three houses in the island of Anglesea. After an active and successful pastorate of thirty-eight years, he finished his course in 1722. His widow, who probably was his second wife, married his successor, Mr. John Thomas. His two sons were in the ministry, and three of his four daughters were married to ministers. His descendants, some of whom are the seventh generation from him, are numerous in Wales, England, and America. Most of them are eminently religious, and from his days to the present time no less than fifteen of the family have been in the ministry.¹

¹ "Drych yr Amseroedd," pp. 34, 35. Thompson's MS.

JAMES DAVIES,

Generally known by his bardic name, *Iago ab Dewi*, was born at Llandyssil, Cardiganshire. He resided for many years near Pencadair, Caermarthenshire; and during the latter part of his life at Llanllawddog, in the same county, where he died on the 24th of September, 1722, in the 74th year of his age. He joined the church at Pencadair during Mr. Stephen Hughes's pastorate, and adorned his profession by a holy and useful life to the close of his earthly career. He was a celebrated Welsh poet. Several of his compositions were published in his lifetime, and some volumes of them are still in manuscript. He translated six or seven useful works from English into Welsh, among which are Beveridge's "Private Thoughts," 1717, and Bunyan's "Come and Welcome," 1719. His character is thus described by his friend and neighbour, Christmas Samuel:—"Iago ab Dewi, the famous translator, died after eighteen weeks' sickness, and was buried at Llanllawddog, the 27th of September, 1722. He was a very considerable man; a man of few words, but of very extensive knowledge. He was a man of good morals, and an old, experienced Christian. I need speak no more of him; his works will praise him in the gates."¹

ABEL MORGAN,

An eminent Antipædobaptist minister, was born at Alltgoch, in the parish of Llanwenog, Cardiganshire, about the year 1673. At an early age he removed to the neighbourhood of Abergavenny, and began to exercise his gifts as a preacher at Llanwenarth and other places in that district, in the 19th year of his age. In 1697 he received an invitation from the church at Blaenaugwent to settle amongst them as their pastor, but for some reason he did not comply with it till 1700, when he was ordained there. He appears to have been a person brilliant talents, remarkable devotedness, weight of character, and free from the narrow-mindedness which characterized too many of his less gifted brethren of that age. Owing to some

¹ Pantteg Church Record.

troubles in the church, and other reasons, he made up his mind in 1711 to emigrate to Pennsylvania, in America, where many of his relations and fellow-countrymen had settled. On the 28th of September, accompanied by his family and some of his religious friends, he took a ship at Bristol, and after a perilous voyage of twenty-two weeks he landed in America, but his beloved wife and one of his children died at sea. His friends in Pennsylvania received him with open hearts and arms, and his settlement amongst them proved very beneficial to the infant churches in that colony, which were made up chiefly of emigrants from Wales. After rendering signal service to the cause of his God, and the denomination of which he was an ornament, in both his native and adopted countries, this excellent minister was removed to a better world in the year 1722, aged 49 years.

Mr. Morgan, before he left Wales, published a translation of the "Anti-pædobaptists' Confession of Faith," and an edition of the "Assembly's Catechism," with the questions and answers respecting baptism altered to suit the views of his own denomination. His preface to this work evinces his charitable disposition towards his brethren of other denominations, and his ardent desire to promote religion and religious education among his fellow-countrymen. He left many valuable works in manuscript. Amongst others, a "Welsh Concordance to the Holy Scriptures," which was published at Philadelphia in 1730. This was the first work of the kind in the Welsh language.¹

THOMAS BADDY

Was a native of North Wales, but of what part we have not been able to find. He was an accomplished scholar, educated under Mr. Richard Frankland, in Yorkshire, whose school he entered November 25, 1689, and Mr. John Owen, of Brony-clydwr was admitted there the same day. He settled as pastor of the Presbyterian church at Denbigh about 1693, and continued to exercise his ministry there till his death, in June, 1729. His congregation was not large, but highly respectable.

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 220, &c.

It appears that he was a gentleman of some property, occupying a higher position in society than most of his ministerial brethren. It is said that he occasionally wore silver spurs, which gave offence to some of his congregation, who thought that in doing so he conformed too much to the fashions of the irreligious gentry. When he was informed of it, he said "that he was sorry that his friends should have put into their hearts to grieve them what he only put on his heels." Dr. Charles Owen describes him as "a very humble and industrious minister." He signally served his generation by writing and translating several valuable books, such as—1. "Sacramental Hymns," 1703. 2. "A Translation of Doolittle on the Lord's Supper," 1703. 3. A Translation of "Wadsworth on Self-examination," 1713. 4. A Metrical Version of "Solomon's Song," with Explanatory Notes, 1725. 5. A Translation of "Dr. D. Williams's Vanity of Childhood and Youth," 1727. His son-in-law, Mr. Philip Pugh, a respectable merchant at Denbigh, rendered essential service to the cause there for many years by his influence and purse. The site of the present chapel is his gift to the church.¹

MATTHIAS MAURICE.

This eminent person was born in the parish of Llanddewi Velfrey, near Narberth, in Pembrokeshire, in 1684. At an early age he joined the church at Henllan, then under the pastoral care of Mr. David Lewis and Mr. David Owen. The church, soon observing in him indications of the necessary qualifications for the ministry, encouraged and assisted him to enter the academy at Caermarthen, under the presidency of Mr. William Evans. While Mr. Maurice was a student at Caermarthen, Mr. David Lewis, one of the pastors at Henllan, died, and soon after disputes began to disturb the peace of the church. Having already given some account of this unhappy agitation, we need not repeat it here. It appears that Mr. Maurice for some time did not side with either party, but eventually he felt it to be his duty to join the party who

¹ "Hanes Ymneillduaeth gan D. Morgan," p. 532. MS. at Dr. Williams's Library.

advocated high Calvinistic views, and the Congregational church polity. If we rightly understand the confused accounts of the case, which Mr. Maurice and Mr. Jeremiah Owen have left us, it appears that two secessions took place from the church at Henllan. The first in 1709, when the seceders formed themselves into a Congregational church at Rhydyceisiaid, and chose Mr. Lewis Thomas to be their pastor; the second in 1711, when Mr. Maurice and Mr. Henry Palmer were the leaders. The cause of the second secession was the same as that of the first—disagreement in doctrine, discipline, and church polity. Mr. Maurice and his party joined the newly formed society at Rhydyceisiaid, and for a short time exercised his gifts there as an assistant to the pastor; but a circumstance soon occurred which led to his removal from Wales for the remaining years of his life. That singular circumstance, according to tradition, and the tradition is partly confirmed by Mr. Jeremiah Owen's pamphlet, was this:—Mr. Maurice being at Haverfordwest on some business, a malicious person betrayed him into the hands of the *pressgang*, who conveyed him in a ship of war to Woolwich, or some place in the vicinity of London. When there, he wrote a statement of his case to one of the London ministers, probably Mr. Thomas Bradbury, through whose influence he got his liberty. We suppose that this must have occurred in the year 1712. Some friends in London recommended him to the church at Olney, in Buckinghamshire, where he was chosen pastor. His services proved remarkably acceptable to this church; and when he received an invitation from the church at Rowell, Northamptonshire, in November, 1714, they were so reluctant to part with him, that for a time they refused to give him a letter of dismission. He took the charge of the church at Rowell, November 21, 1714, and discharged his pastoral duties there with fidelity and remarkable success for twenty-four years. He died at Rowell, in the year 1738, in the fifty-fourth year of his age.

Matthias Maurice, though led by a most remarkable providence to leave his native country at the very outset of his public career, had the welfare of his fellow-countrymen near

to his heart as long as he lived. The fact of his having written so many works in the Welsh language, while residing in England, and some of them above twenty years after he had left Wales, shows the ardency of his patriotism, and his unconquerable desire to see what he considered sound doctrinal views, and scriptural church polity, prevailing in the land of his birth. He probably did more than any of his contemporaries to propagate Calvinistic views and Independency in the Principality, by the important part which he acted in the controversy at Henllan, and the extensive influence of his writings in subsequent years.

He was a man of no ordinary genius, a respectable scholar, and a most faithful and active minister of the gospel. The celebrated Thomas Bradbury, in an introduction which he wrote to one of his posthumous works, says of him, "The author of this work was a person whose learning, temper, and piety made him very dear to me."

Mr. Maurice is advantageously known as an author, both in the Welsh and English languages. His "Social Religion Exemplified" is an immortal work. He wrote the following works in the Welsh language :—1. *Chauncey's Doctrine according to Godliness*. "Translated into the Welsh by Matthias Maurice, for the increase of knowledge, and the promotion of justice, love, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in the creed and the conduct of his beloved brethren and fellow-countrymen, the Welsh people. London, printed for the translator by Edmund Powell, in Blackfriars, near Ludgate, 1711." 2. *Cywir a Ffyddlon, i.e., Sincere and Faithful*, 1720. This small volume consists of several dialogues on the leading doctrines of the gospel. 3. *Y wir Eglwys, i.e., The True Church*. A treatise founded on Canticles viii. 5; to which is added a Short Account of the Controversy at Henllan in 1707–10. Printed in 1727. 4. A translation of Bradbury's three Sermons on Romans viii. 32, 1733. 5. A translation of Dr. Owen's Brief Instruction in the Worship of God, with additions from Dr. Goodwin and others, 1734.

His English works are :—1. *The Work of the Spirit in Prayer*, 1725. 2. *The manner of Baptizing with Water cleared*

up, in a plain, free debate, 1726. 3. Faith Encouraged. 4. Plunging into Water no Scriptural Mode of Baptism, or Mr. Gill fairly answered; and, Baptizing with Water Defended, 1727. 5. Faith working by Love, 1728. 6. Monuments of Mercy, 1729. 7. The Tribes of the Lord appearing before Him, 1735. 8. The Modern Question modestly stated, viz., That the Eternal God does, by His Holy Word, make it the duty of poor unconverted sinners, who hear the gospel, to believe, 1737. 9. The Modern Question confirmed and proved, 1739. 10. Social Religion Exemplified, published in parts, 1738-40.¹

MORGAN GRIFFITHS,

A very popular Antipædobaptist minister, was born in the neighbourhood of Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, in the year 1669. He joined the church at Rhydwillim some years previous to the death of its first pastor and founder, Mr. William Jones. It is probable that he had preached there as a probationer several years before his pastor's death, which took place about 1700, and that he was then ordained to supply the vacancy which that event occasioned. In 1701 he settled as the pastor of the church at Hengoed, Glamorgan-shire, in which situation he continued the remainder of his days, with great, deserved, and undiminished reputation. The church greatly increased during his successful pastorate, notwithstanding the Arminian controversy which for some years disturbed its peace, and branches of it were formed into distinct churches in the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan.

"Morgan Griffiths was greatly and deservedly respected in his own country by all who knew him and valued real worthiness. Nor was he unknown or unrespected in many parts of England, and particularly at Bristol, where he sometimes visited, and where he occasionally preached. He is said to have been a very plain preacher, so that his discourses were generally intelligible to the meanest capacities. Some, indeed, would reflect that his preaching was too plain, and contained

¹ Maurice and Owen's "Accounts of the Controversy at Henllan." Coleman's "Memorials," p. 65, &c. Extracts from the Record of the Church at Rowell, furnished by the Rev. E. Lewis, B.A.

nothing, as they were pleased to say, but milk, or such food as was only fit for children; but the general success of his ministry, and the good sense and unaffected piety which prevailed among his adherents, were sufficient recommendations of his ministerial labours, as well as sufficient answers to those supercilious cavillers. That is, probably, the best kind of preaching where the speaker appears as if he were addressing only the weakest, most illiterate, or uninformed part of his audience. Such a preacher Morgan Griffiths seems to have been. His disposition was kind and gentle, his manners mild and engaging, and his whole deportment such as became the gospel: so that it might be said that he adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour, and powerfully recommended, by his exemplary life and conversation, the divine precepts which he inculcated, and the holy religion which he professed and preached. It will, therefore, not appear strange that his praise was in all the churches, and that his name was long venerated among his pious survivors, after he had finished his mortal course. He died on the 11th of June, 1738, aged 69 years."¹

ENOCN FRANCIS.

This amiable person was born at Pantyllaethdy, in the Vale of Teivi, about the year 1689. He was admitted a member of the Antipædobaptist church which met at different places in those parts when very young. The church called him in the nineteenth year of his age to exercise his gifts as a preacher. Having preached for some time as a probationer, he was ordained as an assistant to his aged pastor, Mr. John James, and after his death was appointed his successor. He soon distinguished himself as a most devoted and able minister of the gospel. About the year 1718 he married a very pious woman from Blaenrhymni, in the parish of Gellygaer, Glamorganshire; and after his marriage he took up his abode at Capel Iago, near Llanybydder, Caermarthenshire. He stately preached at his own house and at several other places in the Vale of Teivi, from Lampeter to Newcastle Emlyn. Such was his popularity, that his announcement to preach at any place

¹ Richard's "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial," pp. 249-258.

would be sure to attract a large congregation. It is said that he seldom delivered a sermon without shedding tears, and that scarcely any of his hearers would have dry eyes. He was accustomed for many years to make an annual preaching tour through South Wales, when he would visit all the churches of his own denomination. Being a most amiable character, and not in the least tainted with sectarian exclusiveness, his Pædobaptist brethren would often invite him to their pulpits. On the 23rd of August, 1739, he lost his beloved wife, in consequence of which the care of six young and motherless children fell upon him alone; but his Heavenly Father did not intend to keep him long under the burden. He was relieved from all earthly cares on the 4th of February, 1740, in the fifty-first year of his age. While preaching at Fishguard, on his return from Llangloffan, Pembrokeshire, he was taken ill, and after a few days' suffering he quietly slept in Jesus. He enjoyed almost uninterrupted peace of mind in his last illness, only he would now and then groan, and cry out, "Oh my six orphans!" A few moments before he expired, he said to his nurse—"I have for many years invited others to my beloved Saviour; I am now going to Him myself." His remains were interred at Cilvowyr, in the grave which had only been opened five months before to receive his affectionate wife. The lamentation after him was indescribable throughout the country among all denominations. His removal was considered a national loss. His six children, whose care so much affected his mind on his deathbed, were amply provided for by the Father of the fatherless. One of the three sons, a very pious young man, died in 1749, in the eighteenth year of his age. The other two became eminent ministers. The youngest was the celebrated Benjamin Francis, of Horsley, in Gloucestershire, whose popular hymns, in both the English and Welsh languages, have immortalized his name.¹

JAMES LEWIS

Was born at Dinas Cerdin, near Llandyssil, Cardiganshire, in the year 1674. His parents are said to have been pious

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," p. 379, &c.

and charitable. He was a good scholar, and was probably educated under Mr. Jones, of Brynllwarch, or Mr. Protheroe, of Llandovery. When Mr. William Evans removed from Pencadair to Caermarthen, about the year 1705, he was appointed to succeed him as pastor of that church, and was ordained there in the year 1706. He exercised his ministry at Pencadair and Pantycreuddyn, in Cardiganshire, for forty-one years, with remarkable acceptance and almost uninterrupted success, and died, after four days' illness, on the 23rd of May, 1747, aged seventy-three years. The congregations at Pencadair and Pantycreuddyn were very large during his pastorate.

Mr. Lewis assisted in the publication of several useful works in the Welsh language, but we have not found that he wrote anything himself, except a pamphlet, to which we have already referred, against Mr. Jenkin Jones, the first Arminian teacher in Wales.¹

JAMES DAVIES

Was a native of Llanelly, Caermarthenshire. We know nothing of his early history. He was ordained at Llanwrtyd, Brecknockshire, in the year 1710. His extraordinary popularity there moved the whole country. About 1720 he removed to Merthyr Tydvil, where for twenty years he was equally popular; but he outlived his usefulness and reputation. The circumstances which proved his ruin were the following:—In 1738, Mr. Richard Rees, a wealthy member of his church, was ordained as his assistant. He had been educated under Mr. Perrot, at Caermarthen, and, like most of his students, turned out an Arminian. That soon caused a serious disturbance in the church. The senior pastor preached Calvinistic doctrines in his usual eloquent style, while the junior used all the influence of his talents, learning, and wealth to propagate Arminian tenets. At length a division took place. The Arminian party withdrew, and erected a place of worship for themselves at Cefncoed y Cymmer; but their secession was far from restoring the peace of the church at Merthyr, as most

¹ Pantteg Church Record. "Hanes Ymneillduaeth," p. 406.

of the parties were near or distant relations, and sympathized with each other, while disagreeing in their doctrinal sentiments. However, Mr. Davies had the confidence of his brethren in the ministry, and the neighbouring churches, until his son, Mr. Samuel Davies, another Caermarthen student, settled there in 1750, "to assist his father, and endeavour to make up the division there." This talented young man soon began to preach rank Pelagianism; and his father, like Eli, by quietly tolerating in his own son what he had so zealously opposed in his former assistant, Mr. Richard Rees, sacrificed the confidence of both the Calvinists and the Arminians. Neither party would believe that he was sincere in anything. Thus one of the most eminent and popular ministers in the Principality was doomed to end his days in obscurity and uselessness. He died on the 29th of April 1760.¹

PHILIP PUGH

Was born in the neighbourhood of Llangeitho, Cardiganshire, in the year 1679. He studied for some years under Mr. Jones, iof Brynllwarch; but probably completed his academical term at Abergavenny, under Mr. Roger Griffiths, who succeeded Mr. Jones as tutor of the Welsh academy. On leaving the academy he returned to his native country. After preaching there for some years with universal approbation, he was ordained in October, 1709, as the co-pastor of Mr. David Edwards and Mr. Jenkin Jones, over the churches at Cilgwyn, Cae'ronen, Llwynypiod, &c. He laboured in that extensive sphere, with constant and increasing reputation and success, for the long period of fifty-one years. He died July 12, 1760, in the eighty-first year of his age, and was buried on the 15th at Llanddewibrefi. Mr. Pugh occupied a high position in society, being a considerable landed proprietor; but his fame rested on a much more solid and honourable foundation—his seraphic piety, unwearied labours in the ministry, and long and extensive usefulness. We find, in the records of the church at Cilgwyn, that he baptized no less than 680 children

¹ "Yr Adolygydd," vol. i. p. 144. The Manuscript Diaries of Philip David, Thomas Morgan, and Edmund Jones

from December, 1709, to March 20, 1760. Considering that he was only one of three pastors who presided over the churches with which he was connected, and that he lived at a time when people generally had a very strong prejudice against the baptisms of Nonconformists, such a number is astonishing. He was a sound Nonconformist and rigidly orthodox. He often refers in his diary in the latter years of his life to the prevalence of Arminianism in the Welsh churches, in language which indicates that his heart was sorely grieved on account of it.¹

CHRISTMAS SAMUEL

Was probably born in the parish of Llangewad, Caermarthen-shire, in the year 1674. He succeeded Mr. Thomas Bowen in the pastorate of the church at Pantteg, near Caermarthen, in 1710. The church continually increased under his ministry. He was also instrumental in gathering and establishing several new interests in different localities of the county of Caermarthen. He published a number of useful books in the Welsh language; among others, an abridgment of "Henry's Commentary on the New Testament," and his "Explanation of the Assembly's Catechism," and also rendered considerable assistance to Mr. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, in the establishment of his Welsh schools. Mr. Samuel was one of the most public-spirited men of his age, and was highly respected by all who knew him. No Nonconforming minister in the county had greater influence with the gentry than he had. He lived to the advanced age of ninety years, and died June 18th, 1764. His son John, who was his only child, was in the ministry, and died at Bradford, Wilts, in 1773.²

The Nonconformists of this period published a considerable number of works in the Welsh language, besides those which we have already mentioned. We have the titles of above one hundred volumes or large pamphlets written and published by them from 1688 to 1735, some of which passed through several editions during those years. The laudable efforts of the Non-

¹ Cilgwyn Church Record. "Hanes Ymneillduaeth," p. 150, &c.

² Pantteg Church Record. Thomas Morgan's MS. Diary.

conformists to cultivate religious literature in the Welsh language at length moved some Churchmen to imitate their example. Several worthy Conformists at this period published a number of valuable works. Mr. Moses Williams, vicar of Devynock, in Brecknockshire, deserves to be respectfully mentioned as the author or translator of several books of sterling worth, and especially as the editor of two editions of the Welsh Bible, published in 1718 and 1727: the first containing 10,000, and the second 20,000 copies.





CHAPTER V.

FROM THE RISE OF CALVINISTIC METHODISM TO THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, A.D. 1735-1800.

The Connection of Methodism with Nonconformity—Griffith Jones—Howell Harries—His Conversion—Commencement of his Ministry—Characteristics of his Preaching—Letters from the Clergy—And from Nonconforming Ministers—Daniel Rowlands—His Conversion—Effects of his Ministry—Beginning of his Acquaintance with Howell Harries—Howell Davies—William Williams—Progress of the Revival—Cessation of Co-operation between Harries and the Nonconformists—State of Religion in Wales in 1742—The first Methodist Association—Separation from the Church advocated and opposed at the Associations—Persecutions at Machynlleth, Newport, Caerleon, Monmouth, Bala, Pwllheli, Caernarvon—Internal Dissension—Separation of Harries and Rowlands—Sandemanianism and Antinomianism among the Methodists—The Expulsion of Peter Williams—Progress of Pelagianism and Arianism in the Presbyterian and Independent Churches—Sandemanianism and Arminianism in the Antipædobaptist Churches—Statistics of the Nonconformist Churches—Revivals—Circulating Schools—Sabbath Schools—Biographical Sketches—Timothy Thomas—William Prichard—David Jones—David Morris—Edmund Jones—Peter Williams—Joshua Thomas—Lewis Rees.



THE rise of Methodism forms a memorable epoch in the religious history of Wales, as well as that of England; but that remarkable movement was much more the effect of the previous labours of the Nonconformists than it is generally represented to be. The devoted and efficient evangelistic services of between two and three hundred ministers, from 1633 to 1735, and the circulation of hundreds of thousands of copies of various religious books in the Welsh language, could not have been altogether ineffective. It is readily granted that the celebrated founders of Methodism found a lamentable amount of ignorance, irreligion, and super-

stitution in different parts of the Principality ; but it is equally true that they left vast districts in the same condition, after their most successful labours, for upwards of fifty years. Evangelical religion and Nonconformity did not take anything like a general hold of the Welsh nation until within the last sixty years, though their progress was much more rapid and general ever since the year 1735 than it had been before that date. As a further proof of the close connection between the great Methodist awakening and the labours of the Nonconformists in previous years, we may refer to the fact that all the leaders of that movement began to exercise their ministry, not in the most neglected and irreligious districts of the country, but in those localities where Nonconformity was most flourishing. Mr. Howell Harries was brought up within half a mile of Tredustan, where there was a strong Independent church of above two hundred members, presided over by Mr. W. Williams, one of the most active ministers in Wales ; Mr. D. Rowlands resided in the same parish as the apostolic and popular Philip Pugh, who had five large churches under his pastoral care ; and Mr. W. Williams, of Pantycelyn, whose father was a distinguished deacon of the Independent church at Cefnarthyn, near Llandoverly, was educated at the Nonconforming academy at Llwynllyd, in Breconshire. Most of the first exhorters or lay preachers among the Methodists had also been members of Independent or Presbyterian churches, and *all* their first societies were gathered in the immediate neighbourhoods of Nonconforming churches. We have not been able to find that a single Methodist society had been formed, within the first six years after the commencement of the revival, in any locality where there was not a Nonconforming church. Welsh Methodism may therefore be considered quite as much an offshoot from the existing Nonconforming churches as from the Established Church.

As Mr. GRIFFITH JONES, rector of Llanddowror, Caermarthenshire, did more than any of his distinguished contemporaries to promote religion and education in the Principality, and as his popular and powerful preaching, together with his educational schemes, indirectly effected a general revival among

the Nonconformists, and, though perfectly unintentional on his part, prepared the way for the rise of Methodism, we should give some account of him before we proceed farther with our history.

This most eminent minister was born in the parish of Cilrhedyn, Caermarthenshire, in the year 1684. His parents were religious persons, and members of a Nonconforming church, probably that at Henllan. Mr. John Thomas, of Llwynygrawys, Mr. David Lewis, of Cynwil, and other popular ministers, often preached at Cilrhedyn and the neighbourhood during the first twenty years of Mr. Jones's life, and it is almost certain that he received his first religious impressions and taste for Calvinistic doctrines under their ministry. His father died when he was young. It is said that he was religiously disposed from his childhood. Having expressed a desire to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry, his mother put him under the care of an eminent classical scholar, who kept a Grammar School at Caermarthen. We know not by what means he was led to enter the ministry in the Established Church, nor whether he had made up his mind to do so before he entered the Grammar School or not. He received his deacon order from the celebrated Bishop Bull, September 19, 1708, and was ordained priest by the same prelate at Abermarlais Chapel, September 25, 1709. He preached for some time in his native parish and other neighbouring churches, and soon became remarkably popular. Having served as curate at Laugharne for a year or two, where his popularity was such that the church could seldom contain the multitudes who thronged to hear him, in the year 1711 he was presented to the living of Llandilo-Abercowyn, and in 1716 Llanddowror was added to it by the patron, Sir John Phillips, of Picton Castle, Pembroke-shire, with whom he was connected by marriage.

"Mr. Jones's constitution was naturally delicate, and he describes himself as having been in early youth so much afflicted with asthma, that he could not walk across a room without pain and difficulty; but his was a mind which seemed capable of imparting a portion of its own energy even to his debilitated frame. As he advanced in life this infirmity in a great measure

forsook him ; and of this we have ample proof in the various labours he accomplished."

Griffith Jones was justly regarded as the greatest preacher at that time in the Principality. Plainness, earnestness, pathos, evangelical sentiments, together with an eloquent delivery, in the most melodious voice, characterized all his discourses. It is not therefore to be wondered at that he constantly received pressing invitations to different and distant parts of the country to preach ; and that, wherever he would go, vast crowds of people would assemble to hear him. He generally contrived to make his preaching excursions during Easter and Whitsun-week, designedly to counteract the wakes, vanity fairs, and other impious gatherings, usually held at those seasons. It is said that he seldom delivered a sermon which did not prove the means of converting sinners. His extraordinary popularity, usefulness, and piety soon excited the jealousy and hatred of his indolent and bigoted clerical brethren ; many of them would not allow him the use of their churches to preach in on week-days, however desirous their parishioners might be to hear him. In many instances, after the churchwarden had announced him to preach, the Incumbent would take away the key of the church. He would generally, under such circumstances, preach on a tombstone, or under the yew tree in the churchyard. Such irregularities brought him into trouble, and for above twenty years he was harassed in the Ecclesiastical Court.

"The fame of Griffith Jones chiefly rests on an institution he devised for the diffusion of education in Wales, still known under the name of the 'Welsh Circulating Schools.' The main feature of this plan is the instruction of the people by means of itinerant schoolmasters. It was first suggested to him by the following train of circumstances :—On the Saturday previous to Sacrament Sunday, it was his practice to assemble his flock together, and read to them the service of the Church. At the conclusion of the second lesson, he would ask, in a mild and familiar tone, if any one present wished an explanation of any part of the chapter they had just heard ; and on a difficult verse being mentioned, he would expound it in plain and simple language, adapted to the capacities of his hearers. On the day following, before

admitting communicants to the Sacrament, he used to examine them on their ideas of Christian doctrines, and as to their general moral conduct. On these occasions his church was generally crowded; numbers came from the neighbouring districts, and it frequently happened that twenty or thirty persons were publicly examined by him before receiving the communion. But he found that those who were likely to derive most benefit from this plan of instruction—men who had grown up in ignorance—were deterred from attending by a consciousness of their inability to answer the questions that might be put to them. To remedy this, he made a practice of fixing the Saturday before the Sacrament Sunday for the distribution among the poor of the bread purchased by the money collected at the previous Sacrament. Having by this means brought them together, he arranged them in a class, and proceeded to ask them a few easy questions, with an affability and kindness of manner that immediately removed all embarrassment and reserve; and pursuant to an arrangement he had previously made, these questions were answered by some of the more advanced scholars. In a little time the humbler classes became willing and constant attendants at the altar. And for the purpose of still further grounding his flock in religious knowledge, he was in the habit of requesting them to commit to memory every month a certain portion of the Bible. Thus it became a regular custom among his poor parishioners to repeat a verse of Scripture on receiving the bread purchased with the Sacrament money.

“This system of examination had the effect of affording him a very clear insight into the notions and attainments of the peasantry, the result of which was an opinion that preaching was calculated to convey only vague and imperfect views to the minds of the poorer classes, unless combined with catechizing and other methods of instruction. Following up these impressions, he was led to consider the incalculable benefit that would result, were a well-organized system of schools extended over the whole surface of his native country. These were the steps by which he arrived at the first conception of that noble machinery which he soon afterwards set in motion.

At first, it would seem that he looked upon his plan rather in the light of a favourite day-dream, than as a project which had the slightest chance of success. Nevertheless, he had too much 'moral chivalry' to despair—too much of that imaginative love of enterprise, without which no great impression has ever been made on the people with whom he had to deal. Accordingly, a beginning was made. In the year 1730 the first school was founded, with the Sacrament money of the parish of Llanddowror; and it answered so well that a second was established shortly afterwards; and this again was attended with such admirable effects that several benevolent individuals, both in Wales and England, were induced to support the scheme with a liberality that enabled their founder to realize his fondest anticipations. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge voted him a very generous donation of Bibles and other books. Thus supported, the schools continued rapidly to increase; from an account published in August, 1741—that is, about ten years after their commencement—it appears that the number of schools in existence during the past year had amounted to 128, and the number of persons instructed in them to 7,595. The plan on which Griffith Jones proceeded was simply this:—He first engaged a body of schoolmasters, and then distributed them in different directions over the country. The duty of these men was to teach the people to read the Scriptures in the Welsh language, to catechize them, to instruct them in psalmody, and to promote their religious advancement by every means in their power. They were sent, in the first instance, to the nearest town or village where their assistance had been requested; and then, having taught all who were desirous of instruction, they were to pass on to the next district where a similar feeling had been manifested. In the course of time they were to revisit the localities whence they had at first started, and resume the work of education anew on the youth who had sprung up during their absence; and thus making a continual circuit of the whole country, to present to every generation, as it arose, the means of knowledge, and the incentives to virtuous principle.”¹

¹ Johnes's "Causes of Dissent in Wales," pp. 16-18.

In order to work out his scheme efficiently, he established a seminary at Llanddowror for the training of teachers ; but as he would not employ any but decidedly religious persons as teachers, he was obliged to apply to his Nonconforming brethren for most of the young men he wanted, as he could find hardly any such qualified persons in the congregations of the Established Church. That proved to the good man a source of considerable embarrassment and trouble. His enemies among the clergy and gentry were numerous, vigilant, and always ready to raise all the objections they could to prejudice the mind of the public against his benevolent schemes. His employing Nonconformists as teachers was one of the most plausible and frequent objections they urged, while to do so was to him a matter of necessity rather than of choice. It is not probable, with all his catholicity, that he would have employed any Nonconformist if he had been able to find a sufficient number of qualified Churchmen ; but rather than leave his poor countrymen to perish for the lack of knowledge, he would receive into his service competent persons, of whatever religious communion they might be. He was not one of those small and narrow-minded beings who would sacrifice both the temporal and the eternal welfare of their fellow-men on the altar of a sect.

“The circulating schools amounted, in 1746, to 116, with 5,685 scholars ; in 1754, to 149, with 6,018 scholars ; in 1760, to 215, with 8,687 scholars ; and in 1761 the schools had increased to 218 ; the number of persons who had been taught to read amounted to 10,000 in a single year ; and 150,212 persons had been taught, in twenty-four years, to read the Welsh Bible, comprising all ages from six years to above seventy.

“Few men have conferred greater benefits on their country than Wales derived from the labours of the good rector of Llanddowror ; and to him it was in great part owing that the Bible has been so generally found and read in the Welsh cottage. Not only was he enabled, by his own self-denial, and the charity of others, to achieve this large amount of good in his lifetime, but at his death he left in the hands of his friend,

Madam Bevan, upwards of £7,000, to be applied by her for the same objects ; and that lady, who died in 1779, gave the books and estate of the late Griffith Jones, and also the residue of her own estate, for the use of the Welsh Circulating Charity Schools, so long as the same should continue, and for the increase and improvement of Christian knowledge. One of the trustees of the will of Madam Bevan possessed herself of the property thus bequeathed ; and having refused to apply it for the charitable purposes directed by the will, the schools were closed for many years, pending an Information by the Attorney-General ; and the charity only came again into operation in 1809.”¹ It is now conducted on such exclusive principles as to be of scarcely any benefit to the poor of the Principality, and not at all consistent with the catholic views and practice of the founder.

After serving his generation according to the will of God, with as much fidelity and more signal success than hardly any of his contemporaries, Griffith Jones died in the Lord at the house of his friend, Madam Bevan, of Laugharne, April 8, 1761, aged 77 years. His remains were interred at Llanddwor.

He is the author of many valuable works, the principal of which, in the Welsh language, is his “Exposition of the Church Catechism,” in one large octavo volume. It is one of the best bodies of divinity in the language. He published in the English language twenty-four numbers of the work entitled “Welsh Piety.” These were the annual reports of his Welsh Circulating Schools. The first number was published in 1737, and the last in 1760. They contain a vast amount of valuable information respecting the religious state of the Principality at that time. All his other works in Welsh and English, as to their spirit and holy tendency, are worthy of the author.

The Established Church, as such, can hardly claim any credit for the varied and eminent services rendered to the cause of religion and education in Wales by Griffith Jones ; for no individual in that age was more bitterly persecuted by Churchmen than he was, while the Nonconformists gave him

¹ Sir Thomas Phillip's “Wales,” pp. 284, 285.

all the assistance in their power. All the Welsh Bishops, and the other dignitaries of the Church, together with the inferior clergy as a body, with the exception of a few incumbents of poor livings, and a small number of curates, were either indifferent spectators of his labours, or his virulent opponents. In addition to his prosecution for twenty years in the Ecclesiastical Court, even a bishop employed a venal clergyman, one John Evans, rector of Eglwys Gymun, near Llanddowror, to abuse him in one of the most scurrilous, vulgar, and obscene pamphlets ever issued from the British press. It was published in 1752 under the title—"Some Account of the Welsh Charity Schools, and of the Rise and Progress of Methodism in Wales through the means of them, under the sole Management and Direction of Griffith Jones, Clerk, Rector of Llanddowror, in Caermarthenshire; in a Short History of the Life of that Clergyman as a *Clergyman*."

Among other charges preferred against Mr. Jones in this vulgar production, the following shall serve as specimens:—

1. That his parents were Nonconformists, and that he himself "was never rightly reconciled to the Established Church, its rubrics, canons, homilies, and clergy."

2. That he had been brought up to the trade of a turner of wooden dishes, and that "he exercised that trade for his pleasure and diversion at Llanddowror, since he was rector there."

3. That he had distributed 24,000 copies of Matthew Henry's Catechism in Welsh in his schools, from 1730 to 1738, and that he always kept for sale several sets of Henry's Commentary on the Bible, which he recommended to candidates for holy orders, notwithstanding its being the work of a Presbyterian.

4. That he freely declared, with the Independents and the Anabaptists, that every man had as good a right to choose his minister as he has to choose his lawyer or physician.

5. That he spent some time, while rector at Llanddowror, to study Hebrew under Mr. Perrot, tutor of the Presbyterian Academy at Caermarthen.

6. That nine-tenths of his communicants at Llanddowror

were Dissenters, who would not enter any parish church but his.

7. That he secretly corresponded with the Methodists, and that all the teachers of his schools were either Dissenters or Methodists.

8. That he coincided with his pupil, Howell Harries, that there were many of the precious lambs of Christ among the various denominations.

9. That in his exposition of the Church Catechism he explains away the precious doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and insists that neither baptism nor any other thing can make any one a Christian, without saving faith in Christ.

10. That "he and his friend (Madame Bevan probably) had been at much expense and trouble to put down all wakes, sports, &c., *to the no small lessening of Christian love and charity*, and of all good neighbourhood, to which they very much contributed, with very little or no ill consequences attending!"

Mr. Jones is described, in the coarsest and most obscene language, as a vile hypocrite, a cruel tyrant, a liar, &c.; and his followers as thieves, idlers, adulterers, and ignorant enthusiasts. Such was the treatment which that holy man received from a brother clergyman, abetted by a bishop, and many, if not the majority, of the Welsh clergy.

Owing to the apathy, the inefficiency, and carelessness of the clergy, the Nonconformists and the Methodists came forward to reap the fruits of the evangelistic labours and educational schemes of the good rector of Llanddowror. He perceived that many years before his death, and expresses himself thus in reference to it:—"I must also do justice to the Dissenters in Wales, and will appeal for the truth of it to all competent judges, and to all those themselves who separate from us (except only such who have hardly any more charity for those they differ from than the Church of Rome), that it was not any scruple of conscience about the principles or orders of the Established Church that gave occasion to scarce one in ten of the Dissenters in this country to separate from us at first, whatever objections they may afterwards imbibe against conforming. No, sir; they generally dissent at first

for no other reason than for want of plain, practical, pressing, and zealous preaching, in a language and dialect they are able to understand; and freedom of friendly access to advise about their spiritual state. When they come (some way or other) to be pricked in their hearts for their sins, and find perhaps no seriousness in those about them, none to unbosom their grief to, none that will patiently hear their complaints, and deal tenderly by their souls, and dress their wounds; they flee to other people for relief, as dispossessed demoniacs will no longer frequent the tombs of the dead. For though the Church of England is allowed to be as sound and healthful a part of the catholic church as any in the world, yet when people are awakened from their lethargy, and begin to perceive their danger, they will not believe that there is anything in reason, law, or gospel, that should oblige them to starve their souls to death for the sake of conforming, if their pastor (whose voice, perhaps, they do not know, or who resides a great way from them) will not vouchsafe to deal out unto them the Bread of Life.”¹

We perfectly agree with the following extract from Johnes’s “Causes of Dissent in Wales,” save only the mistake which runs through it, as well as other parts of that talented work, namely, that Nonconformity had become effete in Wales at the outbreak of Methodism:—“It may now be asked with what degree of propriety the rise of Dissent in Wales can be connected with the name of Griffith Jones—a man whose whole life was spent in exertions to render the Establishment impregnable against Dissent on the one hand, and the more fearful encroachments of sin, ignorance, and superstition, on the other? One answer only can be given; it is a melancholy truth, nevertheless—a truth but too well sanctioned by experience, that a few pious ministers are the weakness and not the strength of an establishment, when the majority of its ministers are sunk in indifference to their sacred duties! The zeal of the few only serves to cast into darker shade the apathy of the many; and, by raising the moral sentiments of the people, to make them more sensitively intolerant of the abuses that surround them. It

¹ “Welsh Piety” for 1741, pp. 12, 13.

is upon this principle only that we can explain whence it was that Methodism broke out first, and most extensively, in that division of Wales where the poems of Rees Pritchard, and the schools of Griffith Jones, had exerted the most powerful influence. And hence it was that so many of those clergymen who had been connected with the latter became eventually the missionaries of Methodism; and it may also be remarked, that the irregularities of the Methodist clergy, which led in the end to systematic itinerancy, appear to have begun by the practice of preaching from church to church, which they seem to have adopted in imitation of Griffith Jones's 'Easter and Whitsun' circuits.

"In tracing the effects of Griffith Jones's schools, in the plain and unsophisticated narratives of the clergymen who corresponded with him, we are irresistibly led to three conclusions:—

"1st. That before the rise of Methodism in Wales, the churches were as little attended by the great mass of the people as now.

"2nd. That indifference to all religion prevailed as widely then, as Dissent in the present day.

"3rd. That if the influential members of the Church had *evinced* the same zeal for the religious education of the people, as was shown by Griffith Jones and his coadjutors, the Welsh peasantry would have continued to look to the Church for instruction, instead of seeking it from the Methodists."¹

HOWELL HARRIES,

The founder of Methodism in Wales,* was born at Trevecca, in the parish of Talgarth, Breconshire, January 23, 1714. Being destined for the ministry in the Established Church, his parents kept him in school till he was eighteen years of age. His father died at that time, in consequence of which his

¹ Pp. 26, 27.

² The word *Methodism* is used throughout this chapter to denote *Calvinistic Methodism*, and not *Wesleyanism*. Though both John and Charles Wesley repeatedly visited Wales, soon after the commencement of the revival, yet no Welsh congregation of Wesleyans was gathered in the Principality till the beginning of the present century.

prospects for a time were somewhat darkened. He then opened a common school in the neighbourhood. In the course of two or three years, a near relative promised him some assistance, and he again began to entertain hopes of being qualified for ordination. It seems that he had been the subject of some serious religious impressions from his childhood, but nothing strong and abiding took hold of his mind till he had passed the twenty-first year of his age. On the 30th of March, 1735, he heard a sermon at Talgarth church, in which the vicar urged on his parishioners the duty of partaking of the Lord's Supper. In answering the supposed objection of his hearers, that they were not fit to approach the Lord's Table, the preacher said, "If you are not fit to come to the Lord's Table, you are not fit to come to church;—you are neither fit to live nor die." The words deeply impressed Harries's mind. He there and then formed a resolution to lead a new life; and on his way home from church he became reconciled to a neighbour with whom he had been at variance. The following Sunday, being Easter day, he went to the Lord's Table. On repeating these words, "We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable;" he began to reflect and consider if such was really his experience.

"I was convinced," says he, "that it ought to be so; and finding it was not so, I perceived I was going to the Lord's Table with a lie in my mouth, and was much inclined to withdraw, but quieted my mind with having determined to lead a new life; and in that resolution I received the pledges of God's dying love. I then began to be more thoughtful and serious, was given to prayer, and strove to keep my heart and thoughts fixed on the Lord;—but all in vain. Thus I went on for about a fortnight, until I almost lost my convictions. Providence, on the 20th of April, put a book in my hands, and I looked into the latter part of it, as a help for self-examination: as soon as I began to read it, I was convinced that *in every* branch of my duty to my God, to myself, and to my neighbour, I had fallen short, and was guilty. I met the

same evening with another book, written by Bryan Duppa, on the Commandments, which made my convictions somewhat deeper: the more I read, the greater did the spiritual light shine into my mind; discovering the extent of the law of God, calling me to account, not only for outward sins, but for my looks, aims, and ends, in all I had thought, said, and done. Then I clearly saw I must be undone for ever.

“The more I searched into the nature of things, the more I saw myself and others, with whom I conversed, to be on the broad road to destruction. I found myself to be void of spiritual life, ‘carnal, and sold under sin.’ I felt that I could no more believe, or mourn for my sins, than I could ascend to heaven. I then began to humble myself by fasting, and by denying myself almost every temporal comfort, hoping thus to subdue the power of inward depravity. But as yet I knew nothing of the inward self-denial which our Saviour enjoins, and I was ignorant of the blood of Christ as the only ‘Fountain opened for sin,’ and a total stranger to the life of faith; and therefore I was all the while in a lost state, and in danger of final destruction. Having laid no foundation, I knew not the Saviour’s voice; until one day in prayer I felt a strong impression on my mind, urging me to give myself to God as I was, and to leave all and follow Him. But presently I felt a strong opposition to it, supported with reasons, that if I should give myself to the Lord I should lose my liberty, and would then be not my own, or in my own power; but after a great conflict for some time, I was made willing to bid adieu to all temporal things, and choose the Lord for my portion. I believe I was then effectually called to be a follower of the Lamb, and had some inward satisfaction in my soul, but no evidence of my acceptance with God, until the following Whitsunday at the Sacrament.

“May 25, 1735.—I went thither, labouring and heavy laden, under the guilt and power of my sins; having read in a book, that if we go to the Sacrament simply believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, we should receive forgiveness of all our sins; and so it was with me. I was convinced by the Holy Ghost, that Christ died for me, and that all my sins were laid

on Him. I was now acquitted at the bar of justice, and in my own conscience; and my faith proved itself true, by the peace, joy, watchfulness, hatred of sin, and fear of offending God, that followed it. I was then delivered from a grievous temptation that followed me ever since I had first given myself to the Lord. Before that time I never knew what inward trials and spiritual conflicts were; only now and then I had some uneasiness from an awakened conscience, which was quite different from those sore trials that I bore from atheistical thoughts, that made my life a burden to me; for they came with such force and power on my mind that I could not withstand them. But at the *Sacrament*, by viewing my Saviour on the cross, I was delivered from these temptations. The world, and all thoughts of human applause and preferment, quite vanished from my mind. The spiritual world and eternity also began, though as yet faintly, to appear. Now I began to have other views, and motives different from what I had; for I felt some insatiable desire after the salvation of poor, lost sinners; my heart longed that they should be convinced of their sin and misery. I became a pilgrim and a stranger here below; all my heart was drawn from the world and visible things, and was in pursuit of more valuable riches.

"I now began to be more happy, and could not help telling people, in going home from church that Whitsunday, that I knew my sins were forgiven me; though I had never heard any one profess that assurance before, or say that it could be obtained; but I was so deeply convinced, that nothing could shake my confidence. However, I felt no persuasion that I should continue in so happy a state, having never conversed with any one that had his face towards Zion, and who would instruct me in the ways of the Lord. However, this was the cry of my soul then—'Now or never; if God leaves thee now, and if thou stiflest these convictions, thou art undone for ever.' The fear of losing what I then had kept me continually watching and praying. Though I had peace with God, yet I was afraid of seeing any of my old companions, lest they should draw me aside, and make me indifferent again. This also induced me to keep close to God

in all duties, and to keep a strict watch over my spirit and lips, dreading all lightness of mind, idle words, and foolish jesting, to which I was naturally prone.

“I was all this while a total stranger to the controversies of religion ; I only knew this, that God loved me, and would, for His own name’s sake, love me freely to the end. This made me love Him again, and study how to show my love to Him. I cannot express the comfort I now enjoyed in my soul, being continually favoured with the Divine presence, and having my conversation in heaven. Now I could talk of nothing but spiritual things, which soon brought contempt upon me. I was daily derided by some, and pitied by others. Some strove to terrify me, and others to allure me with counsel that savoured too much of the wisdom of this world to have any weight with me. All my study was now to show my gratitude to my God. It grieved me that I had neither seen nor heard of any one in the country who seemed in earnest to work out his salvation, or to have any saving knowledge of God in Christ. Though I did not then so much as imagine that I should be useful, seeing not the least probability, but rather the contrary.

“At that time there was a deep slumber throughout the land. The generality of the people spent the Lord’s day contrary to the laws of God and man, it being by none rightly observed. No sooner was public worship over, than the conduct of the people discovered that the heart was entirely alienated from all that was good. The remaining part of the day was spent in indulging the prevailing corruptions of nature : all family worship being utterly laid aside, except among some of the Dissenters ; while an universal deluge of swearing, lying, reviling, drunkenness, fighting, and gaming, had overspread the country, and that without any stop, as far as I had seen, being attempted to be put to it. Seeing both rich and poor going hand in hand to ruin, my soul was stirred up within me. The ministers were the first that lay on my heart. I saw that they were not in earnest, and did not appear to have any sense of their own danger, or experience of the love of Christ ! Hence their instructions were delivered in

such an indifferent, unfeeling manner, that they seemed to have no effect upon any of their hearers. I had never seen one man awakened by their preaching in our part of the country. Their deadness and indifference therefore made me speak, out of the abundance of my heart, to some of those with whom I was acquainted ; but finding it had no effect, I betook myself to secret prayer and mourning ; and engaged some others to pray with me ; and the Lord again renewed my strength. I could not help speaking to as many as possible of their danger. Though I had but little knowledge of the way of salvation by faith, yet I was happy in *feeling* the blessedness of it in my own soul. Death and judgment were my principal subjects of conversation. I set up family worship in my mother's house on Sunday mornings ; some of the neighbours would come to hear me read the Lessons and Psalms. Sabbath evenings I spent with a few friends, whose hearts the Lord had touched with a sense of their danger. Now the fire of God did so burn in my soul, that I could not rest day or night without doing something for my God and my Saviour. Time was so precious, that I knew not how to improve it to His glory and the good of souls. When alone I was wholly employed in reading, praying, or writing. At the same time I continued to exhort the poor people, who flocked to hear me every Sunday evening. I soon became the public talk of the country ; but I was carried as on wings through all my trials, both inward and outward. I was highly favoured indeed by the *Friend* of sinners, and was now quite another man : I feared nothing, though my life was in danger from the threats of such as loved darkness rather than light ; I was not moved, but went on comfortably, little thinking all this time that I was to become more public at some future period. Thus I spent the summer of 1735.”^x

It may appear somewhat singular that Mr. Harries, surrounded as he was by numbers of pious Nonconformists, should have passed through the ordeal of his conversion without making some of them acquainted with the state of his mind, inasmuch as he had no spiritually enlightened friend in the Church whom

^x Morgan's "Life and Times of Howell Harries," pp. 5-14.

he might consult. But having been brought up a Churchman, and probably taught from his childhood to regard the Nonconformists as a perverted and dangerously erroneous set of people, it seems that he designedly kept aloof from them. However, in a short time after he found among them some of his best friends and supporters.

One of Harries's contemporaries gives us the following account of the commencement of his extraordinary ministry :—
 "About those years (1735-37) Mr. Howell Harries began to go out in Breconshire to exhort his neighbours concerning the interests of their souls. He soon grew in gifts and knowledge, and went out to other counties. Vast numbers of young people and others in Wales were then quite irreligious, and used to hold meetings for dancing, intemperate drinking, and to amuse themselves with various wicked practices. These almost all reckoned themselves as members of the Church of England. When Mr. Harries began to traverse the country, he thundered most awfully against cursers, swearers, drunkards, fighters, liars, Sabbath-breakers, &c., and, as it were, scattered sparks of the fire of hell amongst them. He would exhort in dwelling-houses, fields, and wherever he could get people together to hear him; as Mr. Walter Cradock, Mr. Vavasor Powell, and others had done in Wales a hundred years before. But this was quite a new thing in our days, and its novelty attracted large multitudes to hear." ¹

In the beginning of November, 1735, Harries went to Oxford, and entered at St. Mary's Hall, under the tuition of Mr. Hart. He was not then in a state of mind to get any good, or to enjoy any comfort there.

"Having now," says he, "no taste for the entertainments there, I spent the greatest part of my time in secret prayer or in public worship. My friends were now in hopes I should be effectually cured of my enthusiasm, as they were pleased to call it; but the Lord Jesus had now got possession of my heart; so that although I had the promise of a benefice of £140 a year, together with the situation of a sub-tutor in a public school, and although I was encompassed with fair prospects, yet, when

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 52, 53.

I saw the irregularities and wickedness which surrounded me, I became soon weary of the place, and cried to God to *deliver* me from thence ; and thus, after keeping that term, I was again brought to my dear friends in Wales."

On his return home, he resumed his evangelistic labours with more ardour than ever.

" After my return," he writes, " I was occupied in going from house to house, until I had visited nearly the whole of the parish in which I was born, together with some of the neighbouring ones. The people began now to assemble in vast numbers, so that the houses in which I addressed them were too small for the congregations. The Word was attended with such power, that many cried out on the spot for the pardon of their sins. Such as lived in malice acknowledged their faults, made peace with one another, and appeared concerned about their eternal state. The parish churches were now better attended, and family worship was set up in many houses.

" It was now high time for the enemy to make a stand in another manner ; therefore he not only influenced the populace to revile and persecute me, but caused the magistrates and clergy to bestir themselves ; the former to threaten me, and such as received me into their houses, with fines ; while the latter showed their indignation, and used their endeavours to discourage me by other means. This put some stop, for a short time, to our proceedings ; yet it could not extinguish the flame that was kindled. Though fear kept many back, yet such as were drawn by the Divine attraction could not be frightened ; and I continued still to meet them secretly. In the following spring I continued to go from house to house, as before, speaking to all that were inclined to hear me. By this time I gained acquaintance with several Dissenters, who kindly received me into their houses. In this manner I went on, until advised by a particular friend, in the latter end of the summer, 1736, to open a school at Trefecca, which I did ; but presently removed to the parish church. This afforded many young persons an opportunity of coming to be further instructed in the way of salvation.

" The latter end of this year (1736) a man was going from

one parish to another, to instruct the young people in psalmody. This afforded me another opportunity of doing good, and of showing my love to my fellow sinners. I accompanied this man in his journeys ; and every evening, when the business of instruction was over, I proceeded to give a word of exhortation. By this means many were brought under convictions, and many religious societies were formed. I began in imitation of the societies which Dr. Woodward had given an account of in a little treatise on that subject, there being as yet no other societies of the kind either in England or Wales. The English Methodists were not then heard of, though, as I afterwards found, the Lord had been working on some of them at Oxford, and elsewhere. But when I was thus exposed to all kinds of opposition, the way was again opened, though I saw no proper steps which I could securely take, as I was threatened that I should be silenced. But, however, a gentleman in Radnorshire, in the beginning of the summer of 1737, sent for me to discourse at his house. This excited the curiosity of some in the higher classes of society, who came to hear me. Many had their prejudices removed by conversing with me, and some were convinced of their sins. I had reasons to believe that the Lord would bless my labours. Though I still continued to teach a school, yet I went out every night, when I was sent for, and did the same on the holy days, and on the Sabbath. At last, about the latter end of this year, I was turned out of the school, and it was broken up. This, however, conduced to enlarge my sphere. For after this I readily complied with every invitation, and went wherever I was sent for, by day and night, and discoursed to crowded auditories, generally three or four, and sometimes five or six times a day.

“Now I was loaded with all manner of calumnies, from all quarters. The magistrates threatened me, and the clergy preached against me, branding me with the character of a false prophet and deceiver. The mob was also active, laying in wait for me in many places, with mischievous intentions. Yet during all this I was carried, as on wings of an eagle, triumphantly over all. I took no particular *texts*, but discoursed *freely* as the Lord gave utterance. The gift I had received was as yet to

convince the conscience of sin. There appeared now a general reformation in several counties. Public diversions were laid aside, religion became a common subject of conversation, and places of worship were everywhere crowded. The Welsh Charity Schools, by the exertions of the Rev. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, began to spread; people in general expressed a willingness to receive instruction; and societies were formed in many places.

“About this time, I heard by a friend that came from London of a young clergyman, namely, Mr. Whitefield, that preached four times a day, and was much blessed. My heart, on hearing this, was united to him in such a manner as I never felt the like with any one before; but I had not the least prospect of seeing him, being informed that he had gone beyond the sea; it was his first voyage to America. However, in the beginning of January, 1738, I was agreeably surprised by a letter from him. He, having providentially heard of me, wrote in order to encourage me to go on. I was at this time greatly distressed as to my itinerary way of preaching. Yet I went on with the work most actively. Thus I went on, having sweet fellowship with God daily in private prayer, and at the Sacrament, which I constantly attended. Yet still I was, not being satisfied as to my method of proceeding, shaken by Satan, and by a sense of the greatness of the work; but still I was constrained to go on, by the importunity of the generality of the people, and by the visible good tendency of my labours, and the united call and approbation of many whom I esteemed as gracious ministers, and by the *continual power* I felt with me in the work. Thus my spirit was much enlivened, especially when in the Lord's work: and I feared neither men nor devils. Such power and courage I had not by nature; therefore it appeared to me to be undoubtedly supernatural, and from God.

“As to the subject of my discourse, it was all given me in an extraordinary manner, without the least premeditation! It was not the fruit of my memory, for naturally my memory was bad; therefore it was the effect of the immediate strong impulse which I felt in my soul; indeed, I was not able to rest, consequently necessity was laid upon me to go and awaken souls. Thus I

went on, though with fear and trembling, lest others, of bad intentions, should take occasion to go about after my example. I therefore prayed that I might know the will of God more perfectly, and whether His glory, and the salvation of my fellow-sinners, were the only objects in my view. I had power, after examining the matter thus, to rely, in all things, on the strength of the grace that is in Christ Jesus, for power to carry me through the great work; and if His honour should call me to suffer—to be imprisoned and tortured—I should find Him a faithful friend in every trial, in death, and to all eternity. Thus, though I had many comfortable assurances that my commission was from above, yet I was not thoroughly satisfied in my own mind, until summoned before a person of distinction to give an account of my going about as I did, when these words forcibly came into my mind—‘Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.’ And by the effect produced on my soul, I am persuaded that the passage was applied to me by the Holy Ghost.”

In August, 1739, he writes: “After this I was more satisfied than ever that my mission was from God, especially as I had so often applied for Holy Orders, and was rejected, for no other reason than my preaching as a layman. I saw, both from Scripture and the practice of the Church, that the preaching of laymen was proper in times of necessity. I saw, in the Acts of the Apostles, the account of Apollos and others, who were scattered by the death of Stephen, having no other mission than being moved by the Holy Ghost, and love to the immortal souls of their fellow creatures. I thought that a *greater* time of necessity could hardly be than the present, when the whole country lay in a lukewarm and lifeless condition. In many churches there was no sermon for months together; in some places nothing but a learned English discourse to an illiterate Welsh congregation! And where an intelligible sermon was preached, it was generally so legal, so much in the spirit of the old covenant, that should any give heed to it, they could never be led thereby to Christ, the only way to God. Seeing these things, and feeling the love of God in my heart, I could not refrain from going about to propagate the gospel of my dear Redeemer.”¹

¹ Morgan's "Life and Times of H. Harries," pp. 15-41.

Thus commenced the ministry of the most successful preacher that ever ascended a pulpit or a platform in Wales. He was not a great preacher. His discourses, as far as elegance of composition, depth, and sublimity of ideas, &c., were concerned, were not to be compared to those of Griffith Jones, Daniel Rowlands, and several of his Nonconforming contemporaries; in fact, he did not pretend, at least for some years, to deliver composed sermons, but merely unpremeditated addresses on sin, and its dreadful consequences in death, the judgment, and hell. His words fell like balls of fire on the careless and sinful multitude; and in the course of six or seven years he, with the aid of his coadjutors, had aroused the whole Principality. It seems that his appearance was most commanding, his voice solemn and strong, and his earnestness quite irresistible and overpowering. Almost all his hearers were either struck with an awful solemnity, or became enraged. Many were converted, and others stifled the voice of conscience by persecuting the preacher and his friends.

Any attempt to account philosophically for the remarkable effects which everywhere attended the preaching of Howell Harries, would be nothing better than an irreverent trifling with a solemn subject. All that can be said with propriety is, *that he was an extraordinary instrument raised by Providence, at an extraordinary time, to accomplish an extraordinary work.*

Though Howell Harries was a most sincere and attached member of the Established Church, yet he found the clergy of that Church, and their adherents, his most bitter opponents. It can hardly be said that he met with anything deserving the name of opposition from any but Churchmen. About the time of his return from Oxford, he received the following letter from the vicar of his own parish:—

“Talgarth, Feb., 1735-6.

“SIR,—When first I was informed that you took upon you to instruct your neighbours at Trefecca on a particular occasion—I mean, of the nature of the Sacrament—and inforce their duty, by reading a chapter out of that excellent book,

‘The Whole Duty of Man,’ I thought it proceeded from a pious and charitable disposition. But since you are advanced as far as to have your public lectures from house to house, and even within the limits of the church, it is full time to let you know the sin and penalty you incur by so doing. The office you have freely undertaken belongs not to the laity any farther than privately in their own families: and if you will be pleased to take your Bible in hand, you will there find the heavy judgments which God inflicted upon the sacrilege and impiety of those who audaciously presumed to invade the office ministerial. If you will consult the histories of this as well as other nations, you will see the dismal and lamentable effects of a factious zeal, and a puritanical sanctity: for it is an easy matter to seduce ignorant and illiterate people, and by cunning insinuations from house to house, induce them to embrace what tenets you please. I have yet one heavy crime to lay to your charge, which is this:—that after you have expatiated, upon a Sunday, upon the ‘Whole Duty of Man’ to your auditors, which, in my opinion, is wrote in so plain and intelligible a manner that it is incapable of paraphrase, unless it be to obscure and confound the author’s meaning, you concluded with a long extemporary prayer, with repetitions, tautologies, &c. Pray consider how odiously this savours of fanaticism and hypocrisy. What I have already said will, I hope, dissuade you for the future from such practices. But if the admonition of your minister will *not* prevail, I will acquaint your brother of it; and if you will persist in your way, I must acquaint my diocesan of it, which will prove an immoveable obstruction to your ever getting into Holy Orders; for your continuance in it will give me, as well as others, just reason to conclude that your intellectuals are not sound.

“I am your well-wisher, and assured humble servant,

“P. DAVIES.

“P.S.—I have herewith sent you Mr. Nelson,[†] and by seriously weighing what is there said of the sacred function, as

[†] Nelson’s “Fasts and Festivals” is evidently meant.

you will see marked in Ember Week, you will be convinced of your error.

"To Mr. Howell Harries, at Trefecca."

Mr. Edmund Jones, of Pontypool, having obtained from Mr. Harries a promise to visit Monmouthshire in the spring of 1738, the incumbent of the parishes of Bedwellty and Mynyddislwyn addressed him the following note, in order to prevent his coming :—

"MR. HARRIES,—I am surprised at the liberty you take of coming to my curacies of Mynyddislwyn and Bedwellty. You must recede, or else yourself, and the person or persons that hath invited and sent for you, must expect that just resentment due for such unlawful practices. Yours,

"Mynyddislwyn, March 17, 1738." "DAVID PERROT.

In contrast with these threatening communications of the clergy, we shall now introduce a few out of the many encouraging letters which he received from several Nonconforming ministers.

FROM MR. EDMUND JONES, OF PONTYPOOL.

"Gloucester, August 10, 1738.

"DEAR SIR,—I have sent one letter already to you, desiring you to come to our parts as soon as possible, and to my house, having an agreeable message to deliver you, as it comes as a visible sign of the Lord's love to you, sent by the hand of Providence; and, for aught I know, it comes as an earnest of future mercies to you. The Lord again seems to make the Valley of Achor a door of hope; and perhaps you will find it that the Lord is going to pay you for your great labour in his behalf. Lest the former letter should not reach you, I have sent this to repeat the request of your coming down to me speedily. Send me a letter very soon, and let me have three days to appoint you where I think most convenient or necessary. Send the letter to Mrs. Joan Morgan, of Abergavenny, directed for me with all convenient speed. I am to be at

home next Monday, God willing; having been in England for some time ago.

"I remain, yours humbly and cordially in our Lord,

"EDMUND JONES.

"P.S.—I desire you will order it so as to be two nights at my house. I want some time to talk with you, and to concert measures how, in the best manner, we may attack the devil's interest, and advance our Lord's interest.

*"To the Rev. Mr. Howell Harries, at Talgarth,
Breconshire.—This with all care and speed."*

FROM THE SAME.

"May 21, 1739.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been about your societies as a watch, to see both how they did, and whether the devil was attempting to mischief them or no, and say, blessed be God, I found all well, and your mother and aunt were well. I have been in a society at your mother's house, and met with God's presence towards the latter end of the opportunity. I hope I made this journey according to the will of God, as well as at your request; for I have not had so much of God's presence in any journey I made these seven years. But especially it was well with me at Maesyronen, at the last prayer at Gwenddwr, the Lord's day at Tredustan, and Monday at Grwyne-Vychan from noon till sleeping-time, especially in the society, to talk of Jacob's ladder. Your friends in Breconshire begin to long for you, and do very affectionately long for you. But I should give you a more particular account of God's goodness at Tredustan; there was a large auditory, and while they were giving the Psalm in Dr. Watts', Psalm 84, the first part, my soul began to warm and kindle, and a sweet weeping ensued. I laid my head on the pulpit, choosing while so that they would not see me. I had not gone far in the sermon, but the presence of God stirred my soul to speak vehemently to the people, and they were affected. While they were singing the last psalm, God put it strongly into my heart to pour mightily my soul for you to God, in prayer for you, before them all, and was even in haste

to pray for you, and did so. I saw and felt that God loved and would honour you before that large assembly. They were much affected, especially Mrs. Thomas, of Gwernddyfrog, who expressed to me her great longing to see you again. I had strength from God to pray for you at Grwyne-Vychan society, and I heard one ready to cry out once at it. I believe that God's blessings will crowd upon you. But as these words were given out and sung—

‘My soul warm’d with His rich gifts,
The heavenly dove descends and fills the place’—

at the words ‘descends and fills the place,’ my soul took fire, and I believe it was a prophecy of what would ensue, as it came to pass.

“The warrant against you is come to nothing. Counsellor Gwynne would not meddle with it, nor any of the Justices, except the clergy Justices, and Price Davies especially was observed to be your adversary; but they were discouraged, and seemed to be ashamed of it. Parson James, of Llanamwch, who was so active against you, narrowly escaped drowning some time ago, which deserves notice. I desired the young people of the societies to pray especially for those gentlemen who stood for you. The books came to your mother’s house.

“I rest cordially yours in our Lord,

“EDMUND JONES.

“P.S.—I sent a letter a-piece for you, Mr. Whitfield, and Mr. Seward, which I hope you have received from Mr. Hutton, bookseller, since you went to London.

“One Hannah Parry, of Lanfron, hath proposed to join at Tredustan; giving the reason for it to Mr. Williams and me that she could not at all have God’s presence in the church, and had it in the meeting even at Maesyronen, especially in hearing them at the Sacrament. I advised her to stay until we should know your mind in the case, but she was not inclined to stay.

“Yours,

“E. JONES.

*“For Mr. Howell Harries, in the Rev. Mr. Whitfield’s
Company, to be left with Mr. James Hutton, Book-
seller, near Temple Bar, London.”*

FROM THE SAME.

“August 7, 1741.

“DEAR BROTHER,—I received your kind and very welcome letter, and see your great self-denial in it, a matter of conviction to most, and worthy of imitation to all that see it. But going to Longtown, where I am at the writing of this, I parted with it to my friend Mrs James^r the very day I had it. Blessed be God, who blesses Mr. Whitfield's and your labours after him so much in and about London. I am very desirous of his great success in Scotland, where religion was at first planted, and afterwards defended by some of the most glorious providences that I have read of. Oh! how wonderful are you both honoured, while I am of so little use that I cannot but mourn over it, and be ashamed of myself, though I do, from time to time, offer my service to God's cause, and ask Him what will He have me to do for Him. Many are they that hate me; and my friends are but few; yea, the labourers in my Lord's harvest would not allow me even to glean after them; and while the men of this world give a sheaf or two, especially the more generous among them, to poor workmen, nobody would do me that kindness; but when I offered to take up any ear of corn that lay before me, another enviously would take it, yea, and run to take it. Thus Dissenters and those who were not for discipline dealt with me; thus the bigoted Churchmen, the Baptists, and even the Methodists have dealt with me in many new stations: but if this be the Lord's will, I am content, and adore and bless it; and only desire that I would not be of no use before the Lord. Let me die now rather than devour His mercies and be of no service to His cause. However, my dear spouse, who hath had the presence of the Lord last Thursday, from about ten o'clock till about sunset, in such a manner as made her cry out wonderfully, so that I never in my life saw the like before, tells me positively that the Lord will yet raise my head, and will yet own me to cast a light about me; and which I cannot but believe, because God was immediately with my dear spouse, yea, and she tells me God will help in building

Afterwards Mrs. Whitfield.

up the meeting-house, and, when it is finished, give His presence in it. But do not think from this that I am deserted, though I thus write, for thus I think, and have been carried to write without any previous intention.

“I am fully of your mind, dear brother, that there are but few that wholly come out from the world to follow Christ. But there is a cursed conformity to it, and the fear of being counted fools makes men conform to some of the world’s principles, and self-love and self-seeking make them conform to its practices; not considering that according to men’s conformity or nonconformity to the world, they are conformable to, or dissenters from Christ, and consequently good or bad.

“I now begin to collect some help for the building of the meeting-house, and will go about both the meetings and societies, where I am anything acquainted and shall be received. If you are acquainted with some desirable Dissenting ministers and people, I desire you would ask them some small assistance towards the building of our meeting-house; somewhat which they can easily spare. Propose it only to those in whom you may perceive faith to believe they shall be rewarded; and not to any others. If you will do me some service this way, it will be a great kindness indeed, and perhaps in time I shall reward you; but if I do not, God will. There are more of our Dissenting ministers, who are friends to the Methodists, than you mention this side of the country, beside Mr. Henry Davies, Mr. Philip Pugh, and myself, viz.:—Mr. Lewis Jones, Mr. Joseph Simmons, Mr. Owen Rees, Mr. William Williams, Mr. Cole, &c.; but perhaps they will not act much; but you know our Lord’s saying—‘He that is not against us is on our side;’ and I cannot but observe that they are our best men who are favourable to you, and that they are for the most part dry and inexperienced, or Arminians, that are against you—at least, who are bitter. Though indeed, while all of us allow you to exhort, though unordained, and not called in the usual way, but called extraordinarily, yet we cannot still allow of others going on without a rule, much more that there should be a succession of them still rising

up; for this may be a means of bringing an unnecessary persecution upon the church of God, and of shutting the door of liberty in this nation; for though we have seen enough already to excite persecution, yet on men's part nothing but pure duty should be the external cause of it.

“I desire you would prevail with Mr. Whitfield to procure journals of the labours of the Tennents whom you mention in your letter, and give so good an account of. I am glad the followers of the Wesleys came over to you, and wish the truth may crush all errors. Carry it tenderly to their persons; but to their errors give not a place, no, not for an hour, as the apostle phrases it; but pray and preach it down. I am glad Mr. Whitfield hath borne his honest and bold testimony against the lukewarmness and worldliness of Dissenters, and against the loose walking and levity of some of their ministers. There was the greatest need in the world of it; but Mr. Whitfield doth it in a prudent, though yet home manner; and had you, dear brother, done this with less passion and intemperance of spirit, and with more prudence and distinction, observing a regard to their persons, you might have done much good; but as it was, I fear it did but little good. It is my presumption upon your honesty and self-denial makes me venture to tell you this much; but I see our own much greater fault. We should have borne our just reproof, and be humble, and confess our great degeneracy before God and man, and strive to reform: some were humble, and took it so; but most were proud, and rose upon it, to our greater shame and guilt; especially since it came from the man whom God owned so much to do good. We should have borne with you as with younger, if not as weaker brethren; and where, through Satan's temptation, some of you carried things somewhat intemperately and too far, yet we should have either held our peace, or have used entreaties and mild argumentations; but Satan puffed us on the other side to undue resentments, as it did some of you to undue provocation on the other hand.

“I wish some of the sound Dissenting ministers separated from the erroneous and loose Dissenters; but perhaps it will come to that. Both the ministers of Penmain deny that there

is any need of discipline among them, and call my attempts of discipline by the opprobrious names of rigid, punctilious, and novel customs ; upbraid my friendship with the Methodists, whom they call my new friends, but tell me that I had as well or better, or to that purpose, have accorded with my old friends, &c. Thus these men refuse to be reformed—the more is the pity. I forgot in its proper place to desire you not to seek anything for my meeting-house, which we intend to build, of Mr. Samuel Price, because he doth me kindness yearly, but of Mr. Bradbury, if you are acquainted with him, and of Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Hill, &c., if his congregation is not small, and can only support their minister, which is the case with some congregations ; and where that is the case it is not proper to mention it.

“I am concerned to hear how Accord and Rogers, and some other person, whose name I have not heard, should turn Anabaptists. Were they Antinomians, or no ? Let me know in yours. And, dear brother, I here take occasion to desire you to guard people from Antinomian errors, when you lead them into the doctrine of free grace, for that is a rock where many have split ; and when they become Antinomians, they will readily turn Anabaptists : and while you exclaim so much against the lukewarmness of our Dissenters, do not neglect warning of the spiritual pride and intemperate spirit of the Baptist Dissenters, which are yet worse, though accompanied with the zeal which the other lukewarm Dissenters want ; otherwise you may occasion the turning of your friends to the Anabaptists. So subtle is the enemy, that under pretences of advancing free grace, he hath pushed on thousands to the Antinomian whirlpool ; for which reason I humbly give this caution.

“Let me have an account of these men, and of what Mr. Stennet hath done in the matter. Your answer to mine, which I desire may be soon, in expectation of which, I remain your unworthy brother and servant in the Lord Christ,

“EDMUND JONES.

“P.S.—If you can get Dr. Goodwin’s works at second-hand, very cheap, in London, as perhaps you may (else do not buy

them), bring them down with you, or a second-hand Flavel, and I will pay you for them, to dispose of them to young preachers.

"For Mr. Howell Harries, to be left at Mr. James Hutton, bookseller, at the Bible and Sun, near Temple Bar, London."

FROM MR. DAVID WILLIAMS, PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES AT CARDIFF, AND WATFORD, NEAR CAERPHILLY.

"DEAR MR. HARRIES,—This is to acquaint you that upon information from Mr. Jones, I have given out that you will be in our parish (Eglwysilian), in two places, between three and four miles distant, in which places we expect a vast concourse of people. The time nominated is Whitsun Wednesday, at Bwlchycwm, and next day at Maesdiofal, where Mr. Jones will meet you, to bring you to his house. I will either come myself, or send to Bedwellty, Tuesday, to bring you to our house that night. Please to let me have a further confirmation hereof by the bearer. I hope a visit here will turn to some good account, and I shall pray earnestly to God (and engage others also to do the same), that you may come in the power and might of His Spirit.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your most sincere friend and humble servant,

"DAVID WILLIAMS.

"Pwll-y-pant, May 17, 1378."

FROM THE SAME.

"Pwll-y-pant, in Eglwysilian parish,

June 12, 1738.

"DEAR MR. HARRIES,—The bearer is a purpose messenger, sent to inquire how you are; he is one brought under some convictions by what he heard from you, which I pray God may be lasting. Great were the expectations of your coming to the intended places, viz., Llanwnno, Llantrisant, and St. Nicholas; and the disappointment has more raised the desires and longings of thousands of souls. The two days' service

with us has been attended with marvellous success. The churches and meetings are crowded, sabbath-breaking goes down; it is looked upon as a very abominable thing; dancing has been much interrupted, profane swearing and cock-fighting are exclaimed against. But you do not imagine that the devil is mute and still; no, he both speaks and acts, but I think there seems to be more against him than for him in this part of the country. Your friends are more numerous than your adversaries; you are preached against in some places, but it turns to the reproach of them who attempt it. The devil is a lying spirit in the mouth of some to calumniate you to some of the gentry, in order to stir them up against you, and God is pleased again to remove the charge. Upon the whole, I cannot forbear thinking (without any partiality) but that your coming here was from God; and that God Himself, in the might and power of His Spirit, was pleased to come with you. I hope your useful life will be prolonged, and that God, by casting you down, is preparing you for greater service; and hope you will not lay down, or alter your course, while God thus visibly owns you. When Satan has failed of his end in ridiculing and threatening by his own devoted servants, who knows but that he may transform himself into an angel of light, and put some good and religious people upon dissuading of you, which the subtle serpent cannot but know it to be the most effectual way of working with you? But I pray God you may be taught to discern *him* in what way soever he acts. I hope that as soon as God shall restore you to health and strength, you will come to the places above mentiond; whether it be harvest time or any other time, I think it will make not much difference, because people are so eager of hearing you. I intended to meet you as it was agreed upon, and had four or five places fixed upon to propose to you, that wanted your service, were desirous of it, and also convenient; which I shall set before you when I shall next see you, which I hope shall not be long before you come to the above places. I hope you will think the account I have now given you to contain in it much the same voice as St. Paul heard in a vision, 'Come over to Macedonia, and help us.' If you be able to write,

please to do it with the bearer. My parents and all the family give their love and service to you, and pray for the restoration of your health, and the continuance of your usefulness, as also does your very sincere friend, and most humble servant,

“DAVID WILLIAMS.

“P.S.—I saw Mr. Edmund Jones last Saturday, who desired me to give you his service if I would write.”

FROM THE SAME.

“Pwll-y-pant, July 14, 1738.

“DEAR MR. HARRIES,—I hope you recover and get strength continually. You are very much expected in these parts, and I hope you have growing inclinations to come. Here are still visible good effects of the late visit you made us. The last week of this instant, or the first beginning of the next, will be very convenient. The places in view, besides those that have been disappointed, are Llan-edarn (from St. Nicholas there), thence to Machen, or Bassaleg, either of the two, as those concerned shall think most convenient; thence to our parish, where we shall think it most convenient. We talk of the bearer's house, but do not give him any absolute promise, that we may be at liberty to choose a more convenient place if we can. I am afraid the bearer, who has been a wild man, feels none of the pangs of the new birth, has such a flash, but hardly knows why. If you can have an opportunity, please to talk close and home to him upon the nature of repentance and regeneration. He lost opportunities which, perhaps, might have been of service to him. When you come here, I beg leave to dispose of you for two nights. The one will be near the gentlewoman's house I talked to you about, where I expect she will meet you; and the other is in a needful place, where you will be met by young people; some of whom have been wrought upon by what they heard from you, and still hopefully retain the impressions. I intend to have a meeting with some friends, but privately, to pray for the Divine assistance and blessing. I should have told you that you are expected from our parish to Gelly-gaer. The curate, who called the other night at our

house, is for promoting it all he can; though he may act a little behind the curtains, being now about to receive priest's orders. He is the friendliest of all the clergy hereabout, preaches with much life, and endeavours to do all the good he can in the parish. I would not advise you to anything prejudicial to the cause, which I hope I can say I have at heart; but I may tell you, that you need not be so *shy* of conversing with Dissenters in these parts, as in some places, for, blessed be God, prejudice is falling off more and more here.

"Please to write by the bearer, and fix the time. I earnestly desire a share in your prayers. I am sensible of the workings of the same enemy, *self*, which you complain much of, and which I fear more than the devil himself. That the God who inclined you to go thus abroad, and kept you from the cursed effects of Satan, and his agents' malice, may do so still, and abundantly prosper your sincere and honest endeavours, are, and shall be, the real and fervent prayers of,

"Dear sir,

"Your most affectionate friend and humble servant,

"DAVID WILLIAMS."

FROM MR. JAMES DAVIES, OF MERTHYR TYDVIL.

"Merthyr Tydvil, March 3, 1738-39.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I assure myself you do not despise that gospel term. May our evidence be clear to entitle us to the privilege, Heb. ii. 11; iii. 1. As always, so now in haste, I send with sincere tenders of affectionate love, and real respect, to desire primarily change of prayers for each other's persons, labours, and relatives; then what converse we can keep; and, with all entreaties, that with all the speed you possibly can, you will spare us a week between Vaenor, Merthyr, Aberdâr, and Llanwnno. Let me know when, beloved brother, and give me leave to promise you will be at the places appointed, at the hours of 10 or 11. Pardon my boldness in love, for the conveniency and edification of immortal souls. Your adjourning your intended journeys invited this request now, and wishing to beat before the iron cools and hardens, having the more probability to us rationals to expect a deeper impression; though

always the success is owing to Divine influence, that He who effects the work may have the due honour.

"I will not presume, brother, to direct your choice of themes. The threatenings of the law leave some as in Deut. xxix. 19. The free grace of the gospel, others despise, Matt. xi. 17. Neither judgments, mercies, nor ministers can arrive to the province of the Holy Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. May it be our cordial, constant care and study to please Him; may He keep our hearts and conduct under His holy and verily sweet influences; our best companion, guide, and comforter. Then might we expect, yea, depend upon having, direction, assistance, and success; I will only quote 1 Cor. ii. 1, 2.

"I must give over; I owe, and return you thanks for your late labours here. I hope it shall not be in vain. I urge your coming soon, and crave two nights then at my house. Committing yourself and affairs to God, and the word of His grace,

"I remain, your unworthy affectionate
friend, brother, and servant,

"JAMES DAVIES.

"P.S.—Our friends at Ynystaf have frequent meetings, and I had a large and comfortable one there yesterday. I do entreat you as my friend, and charge you as my Christian brother, to mind me in your secret retirements. I will wait daily to hear from you, though I do not know where this script will meet you.

"Yours, cordially in ours, J. D."

FROM MR. HENRY DAVIES.

"LOVING AND DEAR SIR,—Many expected to see and hear you at Aberdare, and Lann, Llanwnno. I pity the people that were disappointed in those places, where you fully designed to be when I saw you. I have seen that pious, zealous man, Mr. Griffith Jones, who was very inquisitive about you, and prayed that the great good God would bless your well-meant endeavours to do good to many souls, and said that he would never be an hindrance to you, but yet he was afraid that some ignorant persons would take to the work that had no qualifications for it.

"I desire an answer to this letter the first opportunity. May the great God bless His visitation unto you, and if sick, may you find honey on the rod of chastisement, and may He bring you, as gold, purified out of this furnace. We would be very glad to see and hear you in the places you promised : many thousands long for your coming. I beg the help of your warmest addresses to God for me and mine. I rest your sincere friend in the best bonds of love.

"HENRY DAVIES.

"Nant Celyn, June 9, 1738.

"P.S.—I shall desire the favour of a line from you, if you are upon the land of the living.

"For Mr. Howell Harries, at Talgarth. To be left with Mr. John Powell, at Glynn. These with care and speed."

"Blaengwrach, July 28, 1738.

"LOVING AND DEAR BROTHER,—Within this fortnight I have written to you afore. That serious, zealous, and pious man, Mr. William Thomas, clergyman at Lantwit-juxta-Neath, is very desirous to see and to have your company. He came purposely to hear you at the Abbey, but was disappointed, and many thousands more. He was reprov'd by a bitter clergyman who lives at Neath. The clergy are divided one against another in our parts. A captain of the cock matches, who heard you at Bettws, promises never to follow that wicked game any longer, and another *dux omnium malorum*, near the sea side, did cut off the heads of his cocks when he went home after he heard you. I have seen him last Lord's day, and he appears a serious hearer. He did invite me to his house. The praise is due to God alone. I find there is much reformation in many since you have been this way, which calls loud upon you to come again as soon as possible. A great gentleman's lady, a lawyer below us, is very much for to come to hear you, and he is contrary. I believe the devil has lost some skilful soldiers, who have listed themselves to be faithful soldiers under the great captain, our Lord Jesus. Remember me dearly to Mr. William Herbert, and all inquiring Christian friends. Oh pray that there would be more cannons sent to batter down the towers of

Satan. I beg the help of your prayers and praises, and that the Lord would give more faith, humility, patience, and holy zeal. I love and long to see you.

“I rest your sincere friend, brother, and servant,

“HENRY DAVIES.

“P.S.—Favour me with a letter when you will receive this, and let me know when you will come to our parts, and how does the work of our good and great Master, Jesus Christ, prosper in your parts? Oh continue in prayer for your poor brother. I desire you to procure Mr. Griffith Jones's letters from Mr. Rowlands, and if you can, prevail with him to come to these parts to preach the everlasting gospel. I shall endeavour to have a letter of consent from one of our clergy if he will come. Give my love and service to him.”¹

Thus, while persecuted by Churchmen, Harries had every encouragement and support from the Nonconformists. Had they acted towards him as the ministers and members of his own church did, he would have been crushed at the outset of his public career. But having been sustained for some time by his Nonconforming brethren, he had the satisfaction of seeing a number of talented and awakened young clergymen willing to co-operate with him.

Among these, the first place in point of eminence, as well as seniority, belongs to Mr. DANIEL ROWLANDS. He was the son of a clergyman, was born at Pantybeudy, in the parish of Nantcwnlle, Cardiganshire, in 1713; was educated at the Grammar School, Hereford; was ordained a deacon, March 10, 1733, and priest, August 31, 1735. He was appointed curate of the parishes of Nantcwnlle and Llangeitho, at a salary of £10 a year, and never had any higher preferment in the Established Church. When he entered the ministry he was an unconverted young man. It is said that he was guilty of

¹ Henry Davies was a native of Caermarthenshire; he was educated under Mr. W. Evans, at Caermarthen, and was ordained at Blaengwrach, in the vale of Neath, about 1718. He was the founder and first pastor of the Congregational Church at Cymer, near Pontypridd. This excellent man finished his useful career, July, 1766, in the 70th year of his age. There was in him a happy combination of the learning of the Dissenter, and the fire of the Methodist.

occasional intoxication, and that he used to go out of the pulpit after the service on Sundays to take a part in the sports and plays of his irreligious parishioners.

About the close of the year 1735, his mind was deeply impressed by a sermon delivered by Mr. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, at Llanddewi-brefi. That, together with the holy example and successful ministry of his neighbour, Mr. Philip Pugh, led him to a serious consideration of his own ways, and ultimately resulted in his conversion. Being endowed with superior talents, when his heart felt the influence of religion he began to preach with remarkable power and effect. His congregations, which were previously very thin, then became overflowing. His fame was soon spread around the country, and he received several pressing invitations to preach on week-days at other churches in the counties of Cardigan and Caermarthen. In the course of a short time his earnest and powerful ministry proved instrumental in effecting a general awakening throughout extensive districts of those counties.

For the first five years after his conversion, sin, the curses of the law, death, the judgment, and hell, were the subjects on which he chiefly dwelt. His numerous hearers were alarmed beyond measure. Finding that he was not declaring the whole counsel of God, the venerable Philip Pugh candidly pointed out his defect to him. "My dear sir," said he, "preach the gospel to the people, and apply the balm of Gilead, the blood of Christ, to their spiritual wounds, and show the necessity of faith in the crucified Saviour." "I am afraid," said Rowlands, that I have not the faith myself in its vigour and full exercise." "Preach on it," said Mr. Pugh, "till you feel it in that way; no doubt it will come. If you go on preaching the law in this manner you will kill half the people in the country; for you thunder out the curses of the law, and preach in such a terrific manner, that no one can stand before you." The young clergyman wisely followed the advice of the aged Nonconformist, and thousands soon had cause to bless God for it.

Harries and Rowlands were converted about the same time, and both had excited considerable attention by their preaching for more than a year before they knew anything of each other.

Harries has given us the following account of the beginning of his acquaintance with Rowlands, and its results :—"Mr. Daniel Rowlands was awakened about the same time as myself in another part of Wales, namely, in Cardiganshire, where, by reason of there being but little correspondence between that county and Breconshire, he went on gradually growing in gifts and power without knowing anything of me, or myself knowing anything of him ; until by providence, in the year 1737, I came to hear him in Devynock church, in the upper part of our county, where, upon hearing the sermon, and seeing the gifts given him and the amazing power and the authority with which he spoke, and the effects it had upon the people, I was made indeed thankful, and my heart burned with love to God and to him. Here began my acquaintance with him, and to all eternity it shall not end.

"This proved the first means of my going to Cardiganshire ; where, on hearing more of his doctrine and his character, I grew more in love with him ; and from that time to this, having been favoured with many glorious opportunities of sitting under his ministry, to the great benefit of my soul, I am obliged to admire more and more the wonderful work of God in him. As he has been so blessed to thousands in several counties, and is more and more owned of God in calling in and building up the lambs of Christ, so it cannot be expected he should escape the malice of the enemy, which he vents upon him in all ways he is permitted, inventing all manner of lies ; but in such a manner is the Lord with him, that I believe the dragon trembles the way he goes. Though I have been now favoured with hearing and reading the works of many of God's ministers, I do not know, so far as I am capable of judging, that I have known any so favoured with gifts and powers ; such a penetrating light to the spirit of the Scriptures, to set forth the mystery of godliness and the glory of Christ. And though he has been often charged with errors, yet the Eternal Spirit has so led him to all truth, and so saved him from falling into any error, that his ministry is, I believe, now one of the greatest blessings that the Church of God in this part of the world enjoys. Many counties partake of this blessing, he being in-

defatigable in going about, and I believe seldom, if ever, opens his mouth without a great blessing attending; this is not for a while, but has continued, to my knowledge, for nearly seven years. All who are able, that have had eyes to distinguish, flock to his ministry, and congregate from all parties and counties—there being often in his congregations and communions persons from eight different counties at the same time. The visible effects on the people under the word and after, as well as the lives and conversations of them that are wrought upon, prove to such as have spiritual eyes, and do not shut them against conviction, that God is there in an uncommon manner.”¹

The acquaintance thus formed by these kindred spirits greatly influenced their future proceedings, and the character as well as the power and extent of the revival. It seems that Rowlands had not hitherto ventured to preach the gospel beyond the limits of “consecrated ground,” and that he had not formed his converts into societies; but finding that Harries had done both, he soon followed his example. Harries, on the other hand, undoubtedly derived many advantages from his acquaintance with Rowlands, who was in some respects his superior.

Mr. HOWELL DAVIES, a young clergyman in Pembroke-shire, who had been brought up under the auspices of the famous Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, began to preach in an awakening manner about the same time as Harries and Rowlands. “Mr. Davies was a Boanerges, and mere formalists could not bear the faithful manner in which he proclaimed the salvation of Jesus. For some time the largest churches were open to him, and thousands upon thousands flocked to hear. This latter circumstance giving umbrage to the unconverted clergy, the pulpits became gradually shut against him. He then followed the example of the prophets, the Lord Jesus Himself, the apostles, the martyrs, and the Reformers, by preaching in the open air to listening multitudes.”²

¹ The “Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Record” for 1852, p. 34. Morgan’s “Ministerial Records,” part 1.

² “Evangelical Magazine” for 1814, p. 338.

Howell Davies soon formed an acquaintance with Howell Harries and Daniel Rowlands, and at once became their most hearty coadjutor. He often itinerated, as a Methodist preacher, through every part of the Principality and many parts of England, and yet succeeded, not without repeated annoyances, in retaining his livings in the Established Church to the time of his death in March, 1770.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS, of Pantycelyn, was one of the earliest and most useful of the clerical Methodists. This celebrated person was born at Cefnycoed, in the parish of Llanvairarybryn, near Llandovery, Caermarthenshire, in 1717. His parents were zealous and distinguished members of the Independent Church at Cefnarthen, in that neighbourhood, and he was educated at the Nonconforming Academy at Llwynllwyd, in Breconshire, under the pious Vavasor Griffiths. While at the academy he went one Lord's day to Talgarth to hear Howell Harries, whose fame was then beginning to spread far and near. Harries was at that time accustomed to stand on his father's tombstone in the churchyard, after the service on Sunday mornings, to preach. Vast multitudes would assemble there to hear him, besides the regular attendants at the church. The sermon that morning had a deep and lasting impression on Williams's mind. We are not informed whether he was then a professor of religion or not, but he attributes his conversion to that sermon. Previous to that day he intended entering on the medical profession; but when religion took possession of his heart he relinquished his former intention, and devoted himself to the work of the Christian ministry. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of St. David's in 1740, and served for three years as a curate at Llanwrtyd and Llanddewiaberghwesyn, Breconshire. At the expiration of the three years he was deprived of his license, and the bishop refused him priest's orders on account of his Methodism. It seems somewhat unaccountable that a young man, brought up and educated among Nonconformists, should ever seek Episcopal ordination, and especially at a time when the Methodists were so bitterly persecuted by the clergy, and even his own spiritual father, Howell Harries, considered unfit to be admitted to

"holy orders" on account of his pious zeal. Williams, after his ejection from the Church in 1743, laboured incessantly as an itinerant preacher among the Methodists to the close of his valuable life on the 11th of January, 1791. Only eleven days before his death, in a letter to Mr. Charles, of Bala, he writes:—"I have but little hope that I shall be able to go out much more, if at all again, for I am even seventy-three years old. But think what a disappointment it must have been to one who used *to travel three thousand miles yearly during fifty years*, and is now not able to move any more than about forty feet in a day—that is, from the fire to the bed! But thus my Lord would deal with me, and it is good."

Mr. Williams was a very talented man, and though not considered a great preacher, yet he was remarkably sweet and acceptable, and at times his eloquence was quite overpowering. But his fame chiefly rests on his incomparable excellence as a Christian poet. His poetical compositions for pathos, evangelical sentiments, and unction, are probably not surpassed by the productions of any uninspired poet. All Christian denominations in Wales use and appreciate his hymns; and some of the few which he composed in the English language are to be found in almost every collection of hymns.¹

Several other young clergymen were soon awakened, and co-operated with the Methodists to promote the revival, though scarcely any besides Rowlands, Davies, and Williams, became professed Methodists for some years. Howell Harries, in a letter to Whitefield, dated October 15, 1742, says—"There are now in Wales ten clergymen who are wonderfully owned of the Lord Jesus Christ, five beneficed, and the other five settled in curacies." Many Nonconforming ministers, and some of Mr. Griffith Jones's schoolmasters, were also very distinguished promoters of the revival; and the repeated visits of Whitefield to the Principality proved of considerable service to the movement. Before the close of the year 1742, the population of almost every district of South Wales, and of many parts of the North, had been aroused to be either earnestly religious, or enraged persecutors.

¹ Morgan's "Ministerial Records," part 2.

Harries, at the outset of his public life, had no other object in view than the awakening of the careless multitude, or, as Johnes expresses it, "to send the Churchman to the church, and the Dissenter to the Dissenting chapel." Even the societies which he had organized were set up merely for the spiritual edification of the members, and not with the view of leading any of them to dissolve their connection with the denominations to which they previously belonged, either really or nominally. It seems that they were set up on precisely the same principle as the Mutual Improvement Societies, or the Young Men's Christian Associations of the present age, where persons of different sects meet on common ground.

While Harries adhered to these unsectarian principles, the most active among the Nonconformists heartily co-operated with him, assisted in the formation of the societies, and visited them in his absence. But not long after he began to associate with the awakened clergy he adopted a more exclusive policy, and claimed all who had been more or less affected by his preaching, and had enrolled themselves members of the private societies, as his converts. Being himself a member of the Established Church, he expected all the members of the societies to regard themselves as belonging to that church also. As the majority of those persons, in most localities, were either actual members of Nonconforming churches, or had been accustomed to attend the ministry of the Nonconformists from their infancy, he thus attempted to effect the wholesale conversion of Nonconformists into Churchmen. The ministers of course opposed him, and consequently their co-operation with him gradually ceased. Scarcely any Dissenting minister associated much with him after 1741, except Mr. Henry Davies and Mr. Benjamin Thomas, and the latter ultimately became a professed Methodist.

Harries's preaching, during the first three or four years of his ministry, proved eminently instrumental in reviving and increasing many Nonconforming congregations; but it appears that he led more away than he had been the means of adding to them when, in conjunction with his clerical friends, he set about the formation of the Methodist body. Some Noncon-

forming ministers, who had been his warmest friends, turned rather bitter against him and Methodism when they saw some of the most active members of their churches deserting them. Others, with more wisdom, said and did nothing against the Methodists, while they used all their influence to prevent the desertion of the members of the societies from the ranks of Nonconformity. Edmund Jones, of Pontypool, was probably one of the most successful in this respect. Sagaciously foreseeing to what the measures adopted by Harries and the clerical Methodists were leading, he anticipated them by forming three or four of the societies, over which he had influence, into Independent churches. Harries felt somewhat displeased at that, and sent him the following mild remonstrance :—

“ Bristol, August 14, 1742.

“ DEAR BROTHER,—I received both yours here in Bristol, for which I thank you. I find our sentiments differing so far about the ordering of the dear lambs, that we cannot have such outward agreement as we had ; but I trust our dear Lord will help each of us to bear with one another. I am satisfied of you (and so have thought and said everywhere, as far as I can remember) that you do that which you consider to be God’s will ; and I trust that you think so of me. Though you may not think some steps I take to be right, yet I know you will not be angry with me, and if you should for a little while, you shall not be so long, for I trust we shall reign together to all eternity ; and for what we now do wrong our dear Lord pities us, for each thinks he is following Him. Permit me humbly, and with all the love I have, which I find is real, to tell you, that for some reason I cannot agree with some steps you have taken. I do not say that you are wrong, but that after solid thoughts, earnest prayer, much weighing of things, and endeavouring to consider God’s voice, I think that affair at Devynock, that motion near Neath, and that in Wiltshire, were not right. Oh do not be angry—rather throw the letter away. I write humbly and truly loving, with all the respect due to a minister of Christ and a child of God ; and in whatever I have misbehaved towards you, pray for me and forgive me. I would

not willingly follow myself. It has been often in my mind to write to you or to see you, but I feared my own spirit, lest I should not treat you or deliver my mind in the spirit of our Lord. I chose leaving it to the Lord. Now you have got the better of me in writing to me first, and may I be enabled to send you my thoughts humbly, meekly, and lovingly. First—as to the division at Devynock, I thought the thing in itself was not right ; that the reasons for it would not in judgment answer the objections against it, and that evil consequences were likely to follow it to us and to the ungodly ;—1st to us, to weaken our hands by establishing enemies, and prejudice honest minds from coming to hear us by being now fixed in what was surmised of us from the beginning, that we went about to make a party, which I had from my heart in sincerity continually denied, for I never had that view ;—2nd, to fortify enemies with reasons against us, to persecute us, and prove us hypocrites, self-seeking, and disturbers in the church, and so provide and supply them with fresh arguments to dissuade the ignorant from coming to hear us ;—3rd, this concerns us the more as the work is but beginning ;—4th, this being the way in which the Lord called us, and began to come among us and bless us, I cannot sufficiently see that he intends to bring in any change.

“ As to the manner of effecting it, you know it was such as gave us a just cause of offence ; as you did not send to Mr. Griffith Jones, Mr. Rowlands, or myself, that we might have weighed, reason calmly, and spend some time in prayer together about it ; as it was the first step of this kind in Wales, and as most of the people had been called through our ministry. I know, if you will put yourself in our place, that you will see it was not quite right, any more than it would be for me if I was to come and take your people secretly from you, though they sent for me.”

These people at Devynock, soon after their formation into an Independent church, erected a chapel at Brychgoed, in that parish. The cause there exists to this day in a flourishing condition—a proof that the transaction was not so contrary to the Divine will as Harries supposed.

“As to that at Neath,” he continues, “I could not see the call clear for our friends to go and make a new sect, and leave the Church entirely. It cannot be proved that Thomas is a deist, and if he were, as to his doctrine, it would not hurt any of us, for none go to hear him, at least to my knowledge, but only to receive the ordinance from him. I bore a public testimony against his doctrine, as they all know I believe, one Sunday as soon as I came out of the church, in the highway, near the churchyard : and further, there is another minister of our church, who preaches orthodox doctrine near there, and receives them to his communion. As to the preaching of the word, they can go to hear it everywhere they meet the Lord, and are pressed to it. Had the Lord taken away His Spirit from the ordinance, that would call them from thence too ; but till then I cannot see that verse, 1 Cor. v. 11, to be so clear at all as a prohibition to eat the spiritual bread with the profane or unregenerate, as to counterbalance other texts and reasons that make for it. Our Saviour and His disciples joined in worship and partook of the ordinances with persons of that character. The tares will always grow with the wheat, and the foolish virgins will be among the wise. That it is our burden that it is so, you may well feel in your own soul ; but it is not yet made clear to me that every particular person in our day, in order to redress it, may go farther than we have gone without being guilty of breaking peace, and of creating divisions, which cannot be fully made clear are for Christ’s sake. Many things are now my burdens among all sects, which, were I set in a place of authority, I would endeavour to reform ; but in the position I occupy, I humbly think I am only called to mourn in secret and publicly over what I see erroneous in principles and practice among all sects. As to the hearing of the word, I direct all with humble earnestness to attend—

1. Where the gospel is most purely preached ;
2. Where their hearts are most preached to ;
3. Where they find the Lord most powerfully working on their souls ;
4. Where they are most pressed on, led on, fed, kept from drowsiness, and urged to grow up more and more to a conformity with God, and out of self and the spirit of the world.

As to the ordinance, I advise

all, for peace's sake, to abide to the utmost where they are, whether in church or meeting ; and when they are fully assured that God calls them to separate, and that they are not led in any respect by self or Satan, then to take the gospel rule of love, and follow the Lord.”¹

These directions were very good had the parties concerned been encouraged to follow them with strict impartiality, which was not the case. Nothing, in the estimation of Harries and his clerical coadjutors, would have justified a separation from the Established Church any farther than they had gone ; but separation from the meeting-house was not such a serious matter, as we shall soon see.

The following paper on the state of religion in Wales in 1742, first published in the *Glasgow Weekly History*, was evidently written by Mr. E. Jones, of Pontypool :—

“Oct. 26, 1742.—I shall give you some account of religion in the Principality of Wales, both North and South. To begin with North Wales.

“In the Isle of Anglesea there is no congregation of Dissenters, and it is the only county in England or Wales that wants one. In Caernarvonshire there is one congregation of Dissenters, who are as devout and zealous as perhaps any people in the kingdom : and they have three lecture places, all on that promontory, or narrow neck of land that stretches out into the sea, and is the best inhabited part of the county. The minister is Mr. John Thomas, a humble, meek, serious man, and preaches well. Mr. Howell Harries, and some Methodists, together with Jenkin Morgan, the schoolmaster, have been made instrumental to awaken and convert many in these parts, but they were grievously persecuted ; and the persecutors have even broken the meeting-house, and committed strange outrages ; the devil, their master, being wonderfully nettled at his losing so many souls. In Denbighshire there are three congregations of Dissenters, viz., a small one in the town of Denbigh, and two in Wrexham, and I might add one in Oswestry, which, though in Shropshire, the people are

¹ The Trefecca MSS.

Welsh, and border on Denbighshire. In Flintshire is a small one. In Merionethshire there is but one, not far from Bala. Their minister is Mr. Lewis Rees, a very godly man, exceeding well gifted in prayer, and also frequent in it. He preaches at two places in this county, though he lives in Montgomeryshire. In Montgomeryshire there are five congregations, two of which were lately gathered by that excellent minister of Christ, the above-mentioned Mr. Lewis Rees, who preaches at five places in this county, and two places in Merionethshire, between twenty and thirty miles from his own habitation. There are some very devout people belonging to Mr. Rees in this county; as also some in Merionethshire.—So far as to North Wales.

“In South Wales.—In Radnorshire there are six congregations of Dissenters, eight if we reckon the Baptists. One of our six congregations there was gathered lately, partly by the labours of the Methodists, and partly through the zeal of a gentlewoman, a Dissenter, who built a new meeting-house. In this county lived the Rev. Mr. Vavasor Griffiths, the master of the Welsh Academy, who died lately. He was in every respect the greatest and most excellent man that I ever saw in my life; nor is it in my power to hope that I shall ever see the like again on this side of glory. Most of the congregations in this county are but small. In Cardiganshire are nine congregations of Dissenters, and one of the Anabaptist persuasion. Most of the congregations here are large ones. Here were lately two eminent clergymen, Mr. David Jenkyns, a young man lately dead, and Mr. Daniel Rowlands, who had at his church some time ago above 2,000 communicants. Almost all the lower part of this county is become religious since Mr. Howell Harries and the Methodists laboured there. Among the Dissenting ministers, Mr. Philip Pugh is the most noted, both for his uncommon piety, diligence, and success: he hath about 500 communicants, and preaches in five or six places. And besides the above-mentioned congregations, the Dissenters and Methodists have several lecture places. Pembrokeshire hath been lately mightily roused up, and abundance of people convinced, reformed, and converted by means of

the exhortations of Mr. Howell Harries, and other Methodist exhorters; and, contrary to Cardiganshire, it is the upper part of Pembrokeshire that has been roused and reformed, and that almost universally, to a concern about religion. Certainly a very great work has been done there. Among the clergy, Mr. David Jones and Mr. Howell Davies are very eminent, especially the latter, who is a mighty Boanerges, and very industrious in preaching, both in churches, houses, and fields. There are in this county six congregations of Dissenters, some of them not small; and three Anabaptist ones, one of which is large. In Caermarthenshire there are near a score of our Nonconforming congregations, some of which are large, and two of Anabaptists. Besides, they have many other lecture places, spread almost over all the county. Among the ministers noted are, Mr. James Lewis, Mr. John Harries, Mr. Owen Rees, and Mr. Henry Palmer, an Apollos in the Scriptures, and very pious. Among the clergy is the famous Mr. Griffith Jones, one of the most excellent preachers in Great Britain, for piety, good sense, diligence, moderation, zeal, a mighty utterance, the like whereof I never heard; he is so catholic spirited and charitable, that he allows his communicants to communicate with Dissenters, and they with him. He hath set up moveable Welsh free schools in every county in South Wales, and in some counties in North Wales, to teach the poorer sort to read Welsh, and hath thereby done unspeakable good. In Breconshire are eight congregations of our Dissenters, two of which I have had the favour, upon the late reformation, to gather and set up, and are yet chiefly under my care. Besides this, there are two or three Anabaptist congregations, and about twenty societies of Methodists, who were reckoned to be converted, and were set up by the labours of Mr. Howell Harries, who was born and lives in this county. Among the clergy, Mr. William Williams and Mr. Thomas Lewis are notable, as is also Mr. Pewry Baillie; and among the Dissenters, Mr. William Williams, Mr. John Watkins, and Mr. John Davies. The Dissenters have above twenty different places in this county to preach in; and there are in it some notable good Christians. In Glamorganshire there are near twenty congre-

gations of our Dissenters, and three of Anabaptists, and several societies of Methodists. Among the Dissenting ministers the most noted are Mr. James Davies, of Merthyr, noted both for his industry and his gifts in preaching and prayer, especially as to the latter, and his congregation is large; Mr. Lewis Jones, for his seriousness, popularity, and an excellent utterance, even much resembling Mr. Griffith Jones; and Mr. Henry Davies, for devoutness and affectionate piety.—So far as to South Wales.

“In Monmouthshire, which is the county I was born and live in, we have seven congregations, and about twenty places to preach in, and six Anabaptist congregations; and most of these meetings are in the western side of the county. Here are also several societies of Methodists who cleave to the Church of England, among whom are some very pious and devout souls. Among the clergy are Mr. John Powell and Mr. Thomas Jones—especially the latter. Besides this, there is a congregation in the Welsh part of Herefordshire, whose minister is Mr. William Jenkins.”¹

According to the foregoing account, the Independent and Presbyterian congregations in 1742 amounted to *eighty-six*, and those of the Antipædobaptists to *nineteen*, exclusive of as many or more preaching-stations belonging to each denomination.

Howell Harries's example in going about as a lay preacher was soon followed by others; but as unqualified and even wicked persons might assume the character of preachers, and so betray and disgrace the cause, it became necessary for the leaders of the movement to adopt some means to prevent such evil consequences. They therefore began to meet once a month, or once every two months, for the purpose of examining the exhorters or preachers, in the year 1740; but no settled plan was formed till the beginning of 1743.

The first Methodist Association in Wales was held at Watford,² on the 5th and 6th of January, 1743. Mr. Whitefield was present, and was chosen moderator. “It then

¹ Gillies' “Historical Collections.” Bonar's edition, pp. 336, 337.

² Watford is the name of a Presbyterian or Independent chapel near Caerphilly, Glamorganshire. A flourishing congregation existed here since

seemed to be the will of the Lord, by the *united* light of all the brethren, after humbly waiting upon Him, and debating the whole matter, that superintendents and private exhorters should be the order among the lay brethren; that Harries should inspect them all; and that the ordained ministers should go about as far as they could; that the superintendents should each have a certain district; and that the private exhorters should inspect only one or two societies, and follow their ordinary calling."

It was agreed at this conference:—

1. That Herbert Jenkins, Benjamin Thomas, James Beaumont, Morgan John Lewis, Thomas James, John Jones, and Thomas Lewis, should be public exhorters.

2. That Richard Tibbot should be the general visitor of the bands or private societies.

3. That twenty-four persons, whose names are given in the original record of the Association, should be private exhorters.

4. That those brethren who scruple to receive the Sacrament in the church, on account of the impiety of the administrators and the usual communicants there; and among the Dissenters, on account of their lukewarmness, should continue to receive it in the church, until the Lord open a clear way to separate from her communion.

5. That no exhorters should be received among us but such as are tried and approved of; and that no one shall go beyond his present limits without previous advice and consultation.

6. That each exhorter should bring an account of his

the days of the ejected ministers. Mr. David Williams, who settled as pastor over it about 1733, introduced Mr. Howell Harries to his people in 1738. Methodism, however, proved a source of considerable trouble to him and his church. Not long after the meeting of the Association the church divided, and the party which had embraced Methodism withdrew, and erected the chapel at Whitecross, about two miles from Watford. Having still too much leaning towards Nonconformity to follow the clerical Methodists in everything, they ordained Mr. William Edwards and Mr. Thomas Williams, members of their society, to be their pastors. Mr. D. Williams, after the disruption of his church, became sour in his mind, not only towards the Methodists, but also towards all decidedly evangelical Nonconformists. It is supposed that he was a Pelagian, if not an Arian, in his latter years. He died at an advanced age, April 6, 1784.—*Philip David's MSS.*

respective societies to the next association, which is to be on the first Wednesday after the 25th of March, 1743.¹

The fourth of the foregoing resolutions shows the *blind* attachment of the early leaders of Welsh Methodism to the Established Church, when they could recommend their followers to communicate in the parish churches with impious clergymen, rather than in the meeting-houses with "the lukewarm Dissenters," however pious they might be. That they should have adopted such a resolution at an Association held in a Dissenting chapel, and when they well knew that the majority and the best informed members of their societies had been gathered from Dissenting congregations, is certainly very astonishing; and it is more so still that Whitefield, at least, should not have protested against it.

Meetings were held after this Association, in February and March, at Llandeusant and Glan-yr-afon-ddu, in Caermarthen-shire; Trefecca and Llanwrtyd, in Breconshire; and Dyffryn, in Montgomeryshire; and a Second General Association was held again at Watford, on the 6th of April, 1743, where Whitefield, as at the former Association, was chosen moderator. Several propositions, agreed upon at the fore-mentioned meetings, were accepted: the brethren appointed to different spheres were named, together with the societies they were to superintend, and the private exhorters and stewards that were to assist them. All the counties of South Wales, and Montgomeryshire, were divided into districts for these various officers. It was also agreed at this Association—"That the superintendents should have liberty to preach on their journeys; that Harries should be superintendent over Wales, and go to England when called; that all persons who think they have a call to exhort, should make application to one of the Monthly Associations, by which their gifts, graces, and call, are to be closely examined, and, if approved of, to have such a district as the Association may think fit, and that the *approbation* must be signified to the General Association; that the superintendents shall send an *account* of what God has done in their particular districts to London every month, directed to Mr. J.

¹ "Methodistiaeth Cymru," cyf. i. p. 162.

Simms, Charles Square, Hoxton, for the minister of the Tabernacle.¹ That each superintendent shall have a book, wherein he shall write the names of each of their private exhorters, and the names of each member of their private society, and report the state of each society to the General Association.

"That the next general Quarterly Association shall be held at Trefecca, on the first Wednesday after Midsummer Day ; that a *secretary* shall be chosen for every monthly meeting, who shall take down in a book the minutes of the proceedings ; that there shall be a Monthly Association in each of the South Wales counties ; that the Monthly Associations shall consist of an ordained minister as a moderator, the superintendent of the district, and his assistants ; that each Association shall begin and end with prayer ; that all superintendents shall be present, not excepting the private exhorters ; that the private exhorters shall not, in their journeys, send their publications or notices of preaching to any place, but speak in any private house to the family and neighbours, if desired. The Association was opened with prayer, and a sermon by the Rev. G. Whitefield, with great power, on 'Enoch walked with God.' The whole Association was carried on with great unity and love. The brethren parted with each other, praising and blessing God for what he had done—still expecting to see greater things."²

From 1743 to the present time, Monthly Associations or meetings have been held in every county, and a general Association of all the counties once every quarter. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodist body, having thus been formed, has continued ever since, with occasional interruptions, to progress steadily, and at times rapidly. Several clergymen, more or less eminent for piety and gifts, have from time to time joined the body. The most celebrated and extensively useful of whom were Mr. Peter Williams, Mr. David Jones, of Llangan, and Mr. Thomas Charles, of Bala. The first became a member of the Association in 1746, the second in 1768, and the third in 1785.

¹ Probably for insertion in the *Weekly History*.

² Morgan's "Life and Times of H. Harries," pp. 96-100.

The first leaders of the Methodist movement never entertained the idea of setting up a new denomination. Their scheme was only intended to introduce and promote a revival of religion in the Established Church; but the measures they adopted being *uncanonical*, they met with nothing but discouragement and opposition from the dignitaries of their own Church; and their attachment to the Establishment necessitated the Nonconformists, on the other hand, to keep aloof from them, in order to prevent the utter ruin of Nonconformity. They were, therefore, placed in a very difficult position; and the two different and rather discordant classes, of which their societies were made up, added not a little to their difficulty. One of these classes consisted of those who had been brought up among the Nonconformists, and were generally well grounded in religious knowledge; the other consisted of such from the irreligious masses as had been converted through the preaching of Harries, Rowlands, and the other Methodist clergymen. These before, as well as after, their conversion accounted themselves Churchmen; and with very rare exceptions were remarkably ignorant of spiritual things. The early exhorters were almost all of the former class. Retaining still many of their Nonconforming predilections, they repeatedly mooted the question of separation from the Established Church at the Associations, which must have been very annoying to Harries and the clergy. The discussion of that question was evidently the occasion of the following resolution, adopted at the Association at *Glan-yr-afon-ddu*, April 17, 1744:—"We agreed to communicate in the parish churches, and to advise the people to do so." Also—

"At an Association held at *Blaenyglyn*, July 3, 1745, two letters were received; one from J. Richards, and the other from R. Tibbot, being under some difficulty how to act at the present time. They were apprehensive that they should be pressed for the army, if they went to preach in some places they had been in the habit of visiting before. They asked whether they should, in order to be safe, *take a license to preach*? Most of us therefore thought that such as the enemy would not touch should go and preach in those dangerous

places, and that others should go more privately, and use all simple wisdom, as this is only a trial for a time. But we agreed that, if the persecution should become general, and the gospel stopped, an appeal should be made to the Legislature, and if rejected, to the Bishops; and then, if our liberty be wholly taken from us, our way would be clear to a separation."¹

In a manuscript, dated May 26, 1744, we find the following statement:—"My friend, Thomas Williams, called at our house, and I had a long conversation with him; he told me, among other things, that the Methodists had once all of them agreed to depart from the Church of England, excepting Mr. Howell Harries, who opposed their design with all his might."²

A letter, signed by five of the Glamorganshire exhorters, among whom was Mr. William Edwards, the celebrated architect, was sent to the Association held at Caio, Caermarthenshire, in April, 1745, in which the destitute state of the societies, for the want of ordained ministers to administer the ordinances to them, is urged as a reason why the clergy should ordain some of the preachers. We are not informed how this letter was received by the Association; but not long after, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Thomas Williams, Mr. David Williams, of Llysyfronydd, Mr. Morgan John Lewis, of New Inn, Mr. Thomas Waters, of Mynyddislwyn, and some of the other exhorters, were ordained, not by the Methodist clergy, but by the deacons of their own churches. It is said that Morgan John Lewis was thus ordained by the deacons of the church at New Inn, and that they had been advised to do so by Mr. D. Rowlands himself. These ministers continued to associate

¹ Morgan's "Life and Times of H. Harries," pp. 104, 105.

² Thomas Morgan's MS. Thomas Morgan was born near Caerphilly, in 1720; was converted under Howell Harries in 1738; joined the Church at Watford, educated at Caermarthen, ordained at Henllan, in June, 1746; removed to Saddleworth, Yorkshire, in 1760; and to Morley, near Leeds, in 1763, where he died July 2, 1799. He was a very respectable, pious, and talented minister. The Thomas Williams mentioned above was a Methodist exhorter of considerable eminence, and the superintendent of the societies in some districts of the counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth. He returned to the Independents, and was ordained co-pastor with Mr. William Edwards at Groeswen in 1745. He occupied that position over twenty years, and died December 16, 1765, aged 48 years, and was buried at Cymar.

often with the Methodists as long as they lived, but their churches have long since joined the Independents.¹

The question of separation from the Church had been more or less agitated in the Methodist body from its formation, in 1743, to the year 1811, when it was actually carried out. The clergy and their friends, with rare exceptions, always opposed it, while the lay preachers and their party continually advocated it. This almost unceasing agitation must have been very disagreeable and annoying to both parties; yet the hand of Providence was evidently in it. Had the clergy been induced to give way to the wishes of the lay preachers and many of the people, and declare themselves Nonconformists, they would have lost their influence over a large portion of the population, who, though quite irreligious, and as ignorant as the very heathen, still had such a prejudice in favour of the Established Church, that they would not have listened to any religious teacher but a clergyman. On the other hand, had the advocates of separation been prevailed upon to give up the point altogether, the probability is that no places of worship would have been erected, that lay preaching would have been by degrees put down, and that Methodism, one of Wales's most inestimable blessings, would have gradually died away in the cold embraces of the National Church.

Methodism effected great changes in the religious habits of the Welsh nation; some of which were anything but improvements. It opened the way for many ignorant and very uncultivated men to go about the country in the capacity of preachers, many of whom suffered themselves to be carried so far by their well-meant but indiscreet zeal, as to say and do many absurd and ridiculous things. Even Harries and the clergy would say many things in their unpremeditated discourses which offended the refined taste of the Nonconformists, and furnished the irreligious of all classes with subjects for profane jesting. Rowlands, the very prince of all the Methodist preachers of that age, was not without his defects. One of the most unprejudiced of the Nonconformists gives us the following account of his preaching:—"Feb. 23, 1744. Went this after-

¹ "Methodistiaeth Cymru," cyf. iii. pp. 21, 22, 374.

noon to Clyngwyn (near Caermarthen), to hear Mr. D. Rowlands. Ben. Thomas prayed before him ; then he preached from Hosea ii. 14. He did not much confine himself to his text, but was very earnest, endeavouring to win the affections. I think I found some efficacy attending his work, though he had some very weak expressions." " May 24, 1744. Went to Caerphilly, where I met many of my old acquaintances. In my way home I heard Mr. Rowlands at Penygroeswen, from Judges v. 23. His sermon was practical, but not critical ; for he said several things which I think he would not have said, had he well considered the matter beforehand." ¹

Such a mighty movement, as the Methodist revival was, had unavoidably some evils attending it ; but those evils are lighter than the small dust of the balance when compared with the incalculable benefits which it has, and still does, confer on the people of Wales.

The *society or experience meetings*, which are peculiar to the Nonconforming churches of Wales, and are regarded by the most spiritually-minded members of all evangelical denominations as essential to the well-being of the churches, is of Methodist origin. So is also the *Association*, where twelve or fifteen sermons are delivered in the open air during two successive days, and where the congregations generally amount to five, ten, and even fifteen thousand. The Associations, or ministers' meetings, in Wales, previous to the rise of Methodism, were similar to the County Associations in England, where only one or two sermons were delivered. They were comparatively cold and formal affairs, and excited no particular attention in any locality. Lay and itinerant preaching, catechetical meetings, and sabbath schools, though not originated by the Methodists, were re-organized, improved, and brought to their present state of efficiency chiefly by them.

When the Act of Toleration came in force in 1689, the persecution of Nonconformists in Wales gradually ceased, so that they were only occasionally annoyed by the mob, incited by some of the clergy and gentry ; but when Howell Harries, and others emboldened by his example, excited the attention

¹ Thomas Morgan's MS.

of the multitude by going out "to the highways and hedges" to preach, the flame of persecution broke out again, in many places, as violent as ever. Harries himself had his full share of ill-treatment. While preaching from an open window at Machynlleth, in the spring of 1739, the mob rushed towards him, howling, threatening, swearing, and throwing stones, so as to oblige him to desist. "An attorney," says he, "came up to me, with as much rage and fury in his looks, and his mouth as full of the language of hell, as if his name had been 'Legion.' A gentleman and a *clergyman* followed him in the same spirit and language, to head the mob. One of them discharged a pistol at me, but I received no hurt."

He gives the following account of the treatment which he and his companion, Mr. William Seward, met with, during a preaching excursion through Monmouthshire, in the summer of 1740 :—"At *Newport* the mob rushed on us with the utmost rage and fury. They tore both the sleeves of my coat—one of them quite off. They also took away my peruke, I being now in the rain. But oh, it was sweet to stand bareheaded under the reproach of Christ! Having had a little silence, I continued my discourse; but they soon hallooed again; and while some pelted me with apples and dirt, others threw stones. I received one blow on my forehead, which occasioned a little swelling, with the loss of some blood. When we came to *Caerleon*, everything seemed calm while Brother Seward prayed and discoursed sweetly by the market-house. But when I proceeded to discourse after him, they began to roar horribly, pelting us with dung and dirt, throwing eggs, plum-stones, and other hard substances, in our faces, while they hallooed so loud as to drown my voice. Brother Seward had a serious blow on his eye, which caused him much anguish. As this affected his left eye, he was obliged to be led by the hand for a few days; and at length he became totally blind of the other. When we had arrived at *Monmouth*, we had much the same treatment as we had at Newport and Caerleon. There happened to be races there, where both high and low were assembled against us. As I began to discourse on a table, over against the window of the Town Hall, where the Duke

of B—— and Lord N——, with a great number of gentlemen and ladies, were at dinner, they ordered a drum to be beaten at our sides; however, the Lord enabled me to bear my testimony against their horse-races, balls, assemblies, whoredom, and drunkenness. The drum continued to beat, and the mob pelting us with apples, pears, stones, and a dead dog.”

Mr. Seward was killed at Hay, in Breconshire, on the 22nd of October, 1742. “A villain struck him with a stone on his head so severely, whilst he was preaching there, that he fell down almost dead; but before he expired he begged of his friends not to proceed against his foe.”¹

The foregoing account of the ill-treatment of Harries and Seward in Monmouthshire, and the murder of the latter in Breconshire, are the worst instances we have of persecution in South Wales during this period. Harries, Rowlands, and others had been often annoyed by the gentry and the mob; but what they suffered in South Wales hardly deserves notice when compared with the violence of persecution in North Wales. Nonconformity was comparatively prevalent throughout most of the southern counties, so that the clergy had not such influence over the gentry and multitude as they had in the northern counties, where there were only a few small Nonconforming congregations.

Harries, on his way to Bala, where he had been announced to preach in the beginning of 1741, overtook the clergyman of that parish not far from the town, who warned him not to go there to preach at his peril. Finding that he was determined to go on, notwithstanding his threatenings and abusive language, he attempted to beat him with a large club, but he rode out of his reach. “When I entered the town,” says he, “I found a large assembly waiting for me, and it was said that the country mob was assembled on purpose to abuse and hinder me. At the request of my friends I quitted the street, and went to preach in a large house. Here I was happy in my soul, full of courage and power, my voice being lifted up like a trumpet, so that the people could hear me in spite of all the disturbance that was made at the door, and window,

¹ Morgan’s “Life and Times of H. Harries,” p. 49.

which was broken in pieces by the mob. They had been preparing themselves by excessive drinking (the drink having been given them by the clergyman), and were now come among the people. Preferring the advice of my friends to the impression felt on my mind, I ceased to speak, though I was yet full of power in my spirit, and retired to an upper room. Instead of retiring, the mob appeared to be more enraged; some surrounded the house, while others climbed to the top of it, threatening me with death as soon as I should come out. Night at length approaching, I thought it my duty to go out among them, committing myself to the hands of God. As soon as I had got out of the house, one of them seized me, but lost his hold; another struck me on my face, whilst others threw stones and dirt at me. I now thought it would be my lot to die like Stephen, in the midst of them. While speaking to and praying for my persecutors, one of the people told me that I was tempting the Lord by staying there. But no sooner had I turned myself around to go away, than I was somehow left to myself, and sunk under the waves. I was not afraid of death, knowing it to be the entrance to eternal rest; I had no doubt of the favour of God through the blood of Christ my Saviour; yet I felt unwilling to die by the hands of these men. They ceased not inhumanly to beat me with sticks, and to pelt me with stones, until I fell under their merciless feet, where they continued to beat me, until the Lord touched the heart of one of them with pity, or fear of being prosecuted for killing me. He swore that they should beat me no more, and was the means of rescuing me out of their hands. My friends, in the meantime, had experienced the like treatment, and bore all patiently, as I had desired them to do. At length we reached our lodgings together, where we dressed our wounds, and rejoiced that we were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake."

A Mr. John Owen, vicar of Llanor and Dyneio, near Pwllheli, and chancellor of Bangor, gained to himself a most unenviable notoriety as a barbarous persecutor. He was the *Bonner* of the eighteenth century. Being a person of considerable talent, a fluent speaker, and a dignitary of the Church,

he succeeded in exciting the clergy, and through them the populace, throughout the diocese into a persecuting rage. It was his practice, in which the clergy generally followed his example, to lead a mob to every place where he found that the Nonconformists or the Methodists intended to hold a meeting. The inoffensive worshippers were abused most mercilessly; pelted with stones, wounded with swords or knives, shot at; men and women were stripped naked in the presence of the crowd; able-bodied men were pressed for the army or navy, and driven away from their families and friends, like cattle, to different parts of England. A full account of the sufferings of Nonconformists and Methodists in North Wales, in the eighteenth century, would fill a large volume. We can only afford space for the following, out of many similar instances.

Mr. Evan Williams, originally a member of the Congregational church at Cwmllynfell, Glamorganshire, but then a Methodist exhorter, was sent by Mr. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, in February, 1742, to Lley, in Caernarvonshire, to teach a charity school, where he met with the following treatment:—

“The 4thth of March he set up the Welsh charity school, which was earnestly desired by some in those parts, and he kept it the 5th and 6th days of March; but on the sixth day, towards night, two men came to the house where he was, and examined him very hard, why he came into that country, &c.—to whom he gave a proper answer, as that he was sent by Mr. Griffith Jones, a minister of the Church of England, to keep a charity school, and to bestow some good books among them for the good of their souls, &c. To this they answered that there was no need of any such thing, and that the Bible and the Common Prayer were enough to bring them to heaven; desiring him also to come out of the house, as he had reason to think, in order to beat him, which he refusing, they stayed there, like hawks watching their prey, till it was far in the night; but at last went away. The next day being the Lord’s day he went to the parish church, where the parson preached a railing sermon against him, and against the Dissenters and

Methodists. When he had done, Mr. Williams came away, but as soon as he was come out of the consecrated ground, into the king's highway, lo ! one of the parson's auditors, and perhaps one of his communicants, stript himself to the shirt, and beat our young man unmercifully with a stick, till he was tired, and wounded his head ; all the rest of these spectators, true sons of the Church you may be sure, with a heathen or Jewish civility, laughing and triumphing at the young man's abuse, only for keeping a charity school for their poor children, to teach them to read the Bible, and other good books, in order to their salvation and happiness, at the cost of others. And their abusing him on the Lord's day, also, will be remembered by God and man, as a shameful aggravation of their brutal behaviour. Not one of them interposed, or desired the man to give over beating him till he was tired ; and then no thanks to any of them for their civility. But attend to what follows ! The young man, with a wounded head, went to his quarters, and about midnight some brethren came to inform him, that these sort of men intended to apprehend him next day, and therefore invited him with them that he might be safe from the searchers ; and I think that he went with them to Tyddyn Mawr. Early on Monday, about thirty or forty of these persecutors gathered together to search for him with their staves, guns, and dogs, as if they would imitate the Jews who apprehended Jesus Christ in that manner. After they searched everywhere that they thought he might hide himself, and after they had horribly abused a young man whom they met with because he would not tell where the schoolmaster was, they came in the evening to a place called Bodfeiliog, near Tyddyn Mawr : while they stayed to refresh themselves after their vain labour, one brought word that they were near ; whereupon the family persuaded him to hide himself. He was not willing, at first, to hide himself, but to let them act their will upon him ; but the brethren overruled his plea, and he hid himself in a cupboard. At last they came to the house, and searched everywhere throughout the house, and about the house, using a horrible language as they went ; till at last one of them, with his foot, struck the cupboard door where he was, saying,

‘Perhaps he is here ;’ to which others of them answered, by virtue of a wonderful overruling Providence, ‘No ! What should he do there ?’ or, ‘It is not likely he should be there,’ &c. After they went away, he consulted with his friends about returning to South Wales, seeing no likelihood of doing any good there ; accordingly, about midnight, he set out to begin the way home, and, having travelled about ten miles, the day dawned, and he rested in a friend’s house the ninth day ; the tenth, he set out from thence, and as they went through a certain village, he and the lad that came with him to show him the way, they met a woman carrying water, who, looking earnestly upon them, and suspecting what they were, went to the house, and lo ! a man came out, and before they were two fields’ length from the village the man cried ‘Hubbub ! thieves !—after them !’ The Apostle Paul saith, in Phil. iii. 2, ‘Beware of dogs :’ he means persecutors ; because persecutors are like dogs. Let but one dog bark, and all the dogs in the village will bark after him ; so here this fellow bawls out thieves, and out comes the vile, ungodly rout after him ; yea, the country about the village rose to pursue after them, as dogs after a hare or sheep ; which, when they saw, they ran for their lives ; but the pursuers soon caught his fellow-traveller, and dealt with him very unmercifully. However, Mr. Williams very prudently slipt off his shoes, and outran them all, till he even lost sight of them ; being a well-made man, and swift of foot, he escaped the brutish rage of this mad crew, as the hare sometimes escapeth from the huntsmen ; or, as some strong sheep, as I have sometimes seen, will outrun some dogs. After he had run about five miles, he came to a steep, rocky wood, by a river side, and there hid himself, to stay till the tide should go out of the river, which his friends, in the morning, thought would be about two o’clock in the afternoon. There he could see the people coming from the market at Pwllheli, both on horseback and on foot, without being seen by them in that unsuspected place ; yet in fear, like a fugitive in Turkey itself. In such straits an honest and well designing Protestant was, in a Protestant country, and which will be remembered to their shame and lasting reproach. Well, after

he had stayed there awhile, till the people had slackened coming from market, he came out of the wood towards the river side, which was very high, and seeing a little boy the other side of it he asked him could he come through it? 'No,' said the boy, 'no horses can pass it.' This was sad news for a man in such danger as he was, and besides, also, it was now very late in the evening, so that he knew not what to do; but at last he ventured, in the name of God, to pass the river, come what would of it, rather than stay among such dangerous, inhospitable men; and in he went, but found the water to rise above him dreadfully as he went on, until at last he was about as high as his shoulders in it; so that he began to fear either to be overset by it, or that it would come over his head; but, through the power and mercy of God, he passed the river. But no sooner he was over, but his fears were renewed by seeing two men galloping towards him from the town; for when a man is once frightened to purpose, he suspects everything he sees to be against him. When he saw them he told the lad, 'If these men ask thee where I go, tell them I am going to yonder sheep,' and so made as if he went to look to the sheep. On he came till it was near night, and then must be out all night, both wet to the skin and in frosty weather, or else seek a lodging, and so did in one or two places, but was denied. However, with much ado, he had some sort of lodging in one house; for in this part of the country they were not yet alarmed against him, else, in all likelihood, he would have been abused here also. The next day he put on his wet clothes, and travelled through Merionethshire, until he came to South Wales, and from thence home; when he gave an account of his journey to the Rev. Mr. Jones, of Llanddowror, who had sent him to North Wales. These abuses, which our deceased friend had from them, were but a few of the mad pranks which these Church of England men, set on, as some say, by their leaders, the clergy (and who doubt it?), exercised towards other religious people; for they stoned them as they went towards the meeting-house at Pwllheli, and as they came back; so that some were bruised and wounded, and some swooned, and lay senseless for a time.

They would also come about the meeting-house, break the windows to pieces, and throw stones upon the tiles and into the house during prayer and sermon time ; and some of them would come into the house, and sneer, mock, and laugh at the minister and people ; sometimes also contradicting the minister while he preached, saying, '*That is a lie, hold thy peace, devil !*' and swearing, cursing, hallooing, shouting, and blaspheming, as if they had broken out of *Bedlam* or *Hell*. Also pricking the people with pins or needles, to make them cry out.

"And those who were cited into the Bishop's Court were there so abused by pulling them by their hair, snubbing their chins, tossing them from one to another, pricking them with pins, needles, awls, &c., so that they were both in fear and danger of their lives. Reader ! what thinkest thou now of these people ? Would not Turkism or Heathenism rather become these people than the holy religion of Protestants ?"

Mr. Williams, after his return from North Wales, joined with his former friends, the Independents, was admitted to the Academy at Caermarthen, and preached to several congregations with remarkable power and effect ; but the cruel treatment which he met with in Caernarvonshire had so affected his constitution, that he never enjoyed health during the remaining years of his life. This seraphic young man died August 19, 1748, in the 29th year of his age.¹

The writer of the following letter was a member of the Independent church at Pwllheli, and employed by Dr. Daniel Williams's trustees to teach a charity school at Caernarvon. The letter, which tells its own tale, was addressed to the Secretary of the Trustees.

"Caernarvon, January 3, 1744

"SIR,—I am this day to appear at the Bishop's Court, in Bangor. Mr. William Williams, vicar of Llanbeblig and Caernarvon, has put me in, on the account of my school. He, the said vicar, came the 13th day of August last, about eleven o'clock at night, heading a mob, in a most insulting and riotous

¹ Jones's "*Life of Evan Williams*," pp. 5, 6, 89-94. See also "*Drych yr Amseroedd*."

manner, to the door of my house, knocked and commanded me to open the door quickly, or else that he would break it. I was just going to bed, and had stripped all to my shirt. I opened the door, and asked him, 'In the name of God, what is the matter?' He answered, 'You shall know, you rascal!' 'Well,' said I, 'what is it you want to know?' He gave me foul names, and told me an untruth to my face; namely, that I raised a mob in town. 'How can you tell such a falsehood upon me to my face?' said I. He replied, 'You brought strangers to town, which was the cause of it.' 'That is another falsehood,' said I, 'whoever told it you. Here is fine doings, Mr. Williams! heading a mob to frighten, abuse, and disturb homes and old people, one seventy years, and the other a blind woman of seventy-four, without the least cause given! What had I ever done against you? What ill have I spoken of you, or wherein have I ever affronted you, that you should thus abuse me?' I argued with him as smoothly as I could, but nothing would do but foul names and foul language, and threatening to do me all the diskindness he could. He said that he would see me in gaol, if he lived a year longer. He went away at last with the mob when he was weary. As he was going, I said, 'Here is a fine preparation to a sabbath day's work!' for it was Saturday night he gathered the mob. I argued with him, 'How could I bring strangers to town, that I never knew—never seen their faces in my life before? If there was harm in their coming, they only passed through the town, stayed a quarter of an hour, or less, on horseback at the door; and had they stayed all night, and longer, what harm was in their coming, more than other people? They were honest men!' &c. Now these strangers were two Dissenting ministers from Montgomeryshire, namely, Mr. Lewis Rees, of Llanbyrn-mair, and Mr. Jenkin Jenkins, of Llanfyllin,¹ going to Anglesea, to preach at a house recorded there by one William Prichard, of Penmynydd. I met with these gentlemen, and showed them the sign of the 'Boot.' Some enemies took notice of this, and suspected that they were Presbyterians, and that they would be preaching that night somewhere. They

¹ Afterwards Dr. Jenkins, tutor of the Academy at Caermarthen.

went and told the vicar the story, and he raised the said mob to go and search for this preaching ; and they have done mischief enough in several places, such as breaking houses, and beating people. Indeed, none of them did me any harm, because he was with them ; they left it between him and me, otherwise they would have done mischief enough here, for he was with them nowhere but with me ; and so he being with them, God was pleased, by that means, to keep me from further mischief in that foul and stormy night. And now to vent his malice, he has put me in the Bishop's Court, as I said above. This man designs my ruin, and will effect it, if he can. He and the new Chancellor have a mind to extirpate religion out of the country. The Chancellor has now excommunicated a very godly and devout young man, a member of our congregation, for teaching people to read Welsh, and perhaps it will be so with me at last ; I do not know what to do, and in this case I am not able to contest with him. I have no money to spend ; my salary is too small to maintain me and my old blind wife, and a girl to attend us : food, drink, and clothing, house rent, and firing, being very dear here. It is too small to provide all this ; but I must live as well as I can upon it, having nothing in the world besides to live upon. A very poor living it affords ; but, God be praised for it, as it is, it is better, far better, than I deserve. I have not a penny to spare to contest with him, and defend myself from his tyranny ; that he knows very well, and my ruin would be his rejoicing. Therefore, good gentlemen, I humbly crave your assistance, with your advice, how and what I shall do in the case ; but I am resolved not to leave the school till they confine me in gaol, as he has threatened. Your speedy answer to this is humbly desired by your afflicted, and most obedient and humble servant,

“ *To Mr. Francis Barkstead,* “ WILLIAM EDWARDS.
at Hoxton, near London.

“ P.S.—This vicar and the new Chancellor, and all other parsons and curates in the country, preach persecution as much as they can, and set religious people out in the blackest and ugliest form they possibly can, that they may be hated and

persecuted. They have set the country all on fire in ferment heat, so that there is no quietness to be had, but spite, envy, malice, and slanders. People are beaten and abused on the public roads. I am actually afraid of my life, if I go anywhere out of town. The Methodists who came to some parts of the country have been the occasion of this ; for those that have been awakened by them fell off and joined with us, and that has made the clergy mad against us, as well as them. We and they are counted the same on that account. The clergy have driven the country mad, and a mad work they do. Let them do what they will to us, we shall have neither law nor equity, do what we can ; and the mob are so sensible of it, that they are emboldened to do any mischief they think proper. It is a pity that no one that is able should appear for the Lord's cause, and defend it, and make some of them an example to the rest, to the honour of religion, and the furtherance of the gospel of Jesus Christ." ¹

The storm of persecution continued to rage, almost without intermission, in most parts of North Wales, from the rise of Methodism to the beginning of this century. The Nonconformists by degrees asserted their rights, according to the Act of Toleration, and so had comparative quiet ; but the Methodists, for many years refusing to declare themselves Dissenters, were subjected to continual annoyances, until the clergy had lost all their influence over the populace.

With the exception of numberless prosecutions for non-payment of church rates and other ecclesiastical imposts, probably the last instance of *legal* persecution which a Nonconformist suffered in South Wales occurred at Brecon in the year 1791. The Rev. Thomas Bowen, of Maesyronen, Radnorshire, who was a very popular and active minister, used to preach frequently at dwelling-houses in various districts of the counties of Radnor and Brecon. Among other places he often preached at a farm-house in the parish of Llansantffraid, near Brecon. His repeated visits to his parish so irritated Parson Frew, that he determined to punish him as far as possible.

¹ From the original Manuscript at Dr. Williams's Library.

Finding that the house in which Mr. Bowen preached had not been recorded for preaching according to the provisions of the Act of Toleration, that consequently the preacher was liable to a fine of twenty pounds, and that he, as an informer, would be entitled to one third of that sum, on his information, and at his request, Mr. Bowen was summoned to appear before the magistrates at Brecon. On the appointed day he appeared there. The presiding magistrate asked him, "Is it true that you preached in Mr. Frew's parish at the house named in the summons?" "It is," was the reply. "Then," said his worship, "you are liable to pay a fine of twenty pounds and the costs." Without cringing, pleading his poverty, and begging their favour, he paid the money at once, and gracefully bowing to their worships, he walked out of the room. A messenger was sent to the door asking him to return, that the magistrates had something to say to him. When he returned the chairman told him, "Mr. Bowen, we have power to fine you to this amount, but we have power also to reduce it to a nominal sum." He replied, "Never mind, gentlemen, the money is now paid, and the portion of it which will go to the pocket of my accuser may injure him more than the loss will injure me." Six weeks after, Mr. Frew, on his way home from Brecon, fell from his horse on a heap of stones, and his skull was so fractured by the fall that his brain was scattered over the stones! The tragical end of this persecutor so terrified his clerical brethren, that none of them afterwards ventured to annoy a Nonconformist preacher as he did.¹

The various religious bodies during this period have repeatedly been subjected to what was a thousand times worse than any persecution or affliction which their enemies could inflict on them—internal dissensions. It is painful to refer to the discords of religious people; but historical fidelity will not permit us to pass them unnoticed.

It appears that some disagreement had arisen between Harries and Rowlands as early as the year 1747, which gradually became more and more serious, until at length it came to a rupture at an Association held at Llanidloes, in 1751.

¹ Thomas Bowen's MS.

At that time the Methodist body was divided into two hostile parties, called Harries's people and Rowlands' people. All the clergy, and a large number, probably the majority, of the exhorters sided with Rowlands : but many of the exhorters also most zealously took the part of Harries, while some, who had been originally members of Nonconforming churches, returned to their former friends.

"The effect of this separation was most painful and distressing throughout all the Principality. The different parties were disputing with and vilifying each other with all their might, until the flourishing societies, lately formed, were broken up and destroyed throughout the country. So that religion became very low, and was almost destroyed, in many of those places where it appeared prosperous and delightful before. Those preachers in connection with Harries went immediately through most parts of Wales, where the private societies were established ; and after preaching in those places, they would call the friends together, asking them who were on the Lord's side? and saying that it was time for them to take care that they should not be deceived ; asserting that the *parsons*, as they called Rowlands and his friends, *had lost God!* The members of most of the churches, being young and inexperienced, were so perplexed by this unexpected circumstance that they did not know what to do. Many would not go near Rowlands and his party for fear they should be deceived by them, as they were warned by the other teachers. Many of the places of worship were closed against Rowlands and his friends. But in the course of time most of the congregations and the preachers returned to Rowlands and his party." ¹

Some of the preachers who at first adhered to Harries left him, and attempted to set up a new sect, whose creed was a strange medley of Quakerism, Mysticism, Antinomianism, and several other *isms*. A few eccentric and weak-minded persons became their followers, but the whole scheme soon came to nothing.²

Harries, after his separation from Rowlands, settled at

¹ Morgan's "Ministerial Records," part i. pp. 74, 75.

² "Drych yr Amseroedd," p. 138.

Trefecca ; and as many of his friends from different parts of Wales expressed a desire to live with him, he erected a large building there for their reception, and established a kind of a *Protestant Monastery*. The foundation of the building was laid in April, 1752 ; and by the beginning of 1754 the inmates, or "the family," as they were called, consisted of one hundred persons. In 1755 the number had increased to one hundred and twenty, besides several families from North Wales, who settled in the neighbourhood in order to be convenient to attend Harries's ministry. All the affairs of the establishment, both secular and religious, were superintended and managed in the most orderly manner by the founder ; and the most malicious enemies have never been able to charge him, nor any of his numerous family, with anything unbecoming the holy religion they professed, save only that they had set about establishing an institution which seemed inconsistent with the genius of Protestantism, and unadapted to answer any valuable purpose.

In 1759, Harries, and twenty of the members of his family, joined the Breconshire Militia. His apprehension of a French invasion, and the consequent establishment of Popery in this kingdom, induced him to take that strange step. During his short military career he did much good by preaching, especially in various parts of England. He would generally stand up to preach in his regimentals, in such places where the mob would not have tolerated other preachers. It is said that he, while stationed for some time in a small town in Devonshire, and finding that there was no evangelical preaching anywhere there, determined to preach in the street in front of a pious widow's house. A crier was sent around the town to announce that a sermon was to be delivered the following Sunday afternoon by a stranger, at the place which he named. A large crowd gathered there, and Harries, wearing a long black overcoat which covered all his regimentals, mounted a chair and commenced the service. The crowd soon began to yell and interrupt. He repeatedly appealed to them in the name of the King of heaven to listen to what he had to say. But the interruption grew worse after each appeal. At last he took off the overcoat, and appearing in his full regimentals he shouted

out authoritatively, "I command you in the name of King George to be quiet." That frightened the mob, and he had perfect quietness to go on. It is said that several were converted under that sermon. On the conclusion of a treaty of peace in 1763, he returned, with the members of his family who had accompanied him, to Trefecca, where he spent the remaining years of his life in comparative retirement. It was his constant practice, ever since the establishment of the institution at Trefecca, to hold three or four religious services every day, for the benefit of the family, and as many of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood as felt disposed to attend them.

This extraordinary man finished his eventful and remarkable life on the 21st of July, 1773. A more pious, sincere, earnest, and energetic man than Howell Harries never lived; but his whole history proves that his great defect was the want of *prudence*. His life, useful as it was, would have been much more so had he been more cautious and wise.

We have not yet met with any satisfactory statement of the *real cause* of the disagreement between Harries and Rowlands and his friends. The use of some unguarded expressions by Harries in his sermons, respecting the death of Christ, such as *that God died on the cross*, &c., and his unwillingness to acknowledge that such expressions were improper, and to condescend to be instructed how to express himself on the subject, are generally stated to have been the cause of the separation; but if that contributed in some measure to widen the breach, we can hardly believe that it was either the sole or the chief cause of it; for we find on almost every page of Williams of Pantycelyn's hymns, which were highly approved of by Rowlands, expressions similar to those which Harries is blamed for using. We are led to infer, from some expressions in "Williams's Elegy on Harries," that the root of all the evil was *the assumption by Harries of some authority in the connexion, which the clergy considered that a layman, however eminent, should not have assumed*. But the unhappy event, whatever was its cause, affected most disastrously the interests of religion among all denominations in Wales for many years.

Before the Methodist body had quite recovered from the

sad effects of the separation between Harries and Rowlands, its peace was again disturbed, in 1765 and 1766, by the efforts of two preachers of considerable influence to propagate Sandemanian and Antinomian sentiments in the congregations. These preachers were one Mr. Popkins, of Swansea, a person in affluent circumstances, and a Mr. David Jones, of Cardiganshire, a very popular preacher, and a nephew of Mr. Daniel Rowlands. These persons were in positions to do much mischief—the one by his wealth, and the other by his popularity as a preacher. They succeeded in a short time in perverting many of the members of the societies, and some of the preachers; but the bold and determined stand made by Williams, of Pantycelyn, and other leading men, against them, soon arrested the progress of the evil. Popkins withdrew from the connexion, and Jones in a short time turned out a reprobate character.

A third and a most unhappy and long-continued agitation was commenced in the Methodist body in 1770. In that year Mr. Peter Williams, confessedly the most talented, and in many respects the most useful, of all the clerical Methodists of that age, published an edition of the Welsh Bible, with marginal references, and explanatory notes at the end of each chapter. That valuable work, which has long since found its way to almost every religious family in the Principality, was the first commentary on the Bible ever published in the Welsh language. In a note on the first chapter of the Gospel by John, the author made use of an expression which, in the opinion of some persons in the connexion, amounted to *Sabelianism*. Having discovered it, they immediately preferred a charge of heresy against him, and the discussion of that point continued to disturb the peace of the body for above twenty years. So long as Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Williams, of Pantycelyn, lived, an open rupture was prevented; but soon after their removal, in 1790 and 1791, Peter Williams, notwithstanding his piety and eminent usefulness, was unceremoniously expelled from the connexion. When the pulpits of the Methodists were closed against him, those of the most rigidly orthodox Independents and Antipædobaptists were cheerfully opened to him—a proof

that he was not such a dangerous heretic as his opponents represented him.

This treatment of the venerable Peter Williams is the darkest passage in the history of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist body. His expulsion, in the seventieth year of his age, after faithfully and signally serving the connexion for nearly fifty years, and often at the peril of his life, was, to say the least, an act of the basest ingratitude. Multitudes among the members of the Methodist body disapproved of it; but being the act of parties whom they had placed in power, they were all implicated in it. Whatever may be the defects of Congregationalism, it will never furnish imperious individuals with power to tyrannize over their brethren and the churches—an evil grievously felt, and often complained of, in the connexional bodies.

While the Methodist body had thus to bear the yoke of affliction in its youth, the older denominations also, during this eventful period, had their full share of trouble from internal dissensions, if they were not subjected to so much persecution as their Methodist brethren.

Pelagianism, from the year 1728, continued steadily, but quietly, for some years, to gain ground among the ministers and congregations of the Pædobaptist section of the Nonconformists. Several learned ministers, who occupied the most conspicuous positions, embraced it; however, for a considerable time, they proceeded cautiously, and carefully avoided introducing the peculiarity of their creed into their sermons. The subjects of their discourses generally were some points of morality, in which all parties—Calvinists, Arminians, and Arians—were agreed. The following remark respecting a sermon by Mr. Samuel Thomas, the tutor at Caermarthen, by one who was then his student, might have been made in regard to the preaching of almost all the ministers in Wales, who leaned to Arminian and Pelagian views, from 1728 to 1770:—"May 7th, 1744. In the afternoon I heard Mr. S. Thomas, from Prov. ii. 2, 3, 4. He gave several good rules to search after truth; but indeed his sermon was no more to me than a good lecture on *moral philosophy*. I wanted to have more of

Christ preached, which I consider as the best way of preaching.”¹

The orthodox ministers continually condemned that negative style of preaching, and the Pelagians, by degrees, declared their principles more openly, so that things were brought to a crisis about the year 1770. At that time, and for the previous fifty or sixty years, the Independent and Presbyterian churches held an annual Association at Caermarthen, at the time of the examination of the students at the Academy. The tutors, and some of the leading ministers, being Pelagians, contrived so to manage these annual meetings as to exclude most of the reputed Calvinistic ministers in the Principality from taking any prominent part in their transactions. That unfair treatment, together with their conscientious hatred of Pelagianism, led the Calvinistic party in 1754 to establish an Independent Academy at Abergavenny, and about the same time to set up a Quarterly Association, whose meetings were held by rotation in the different counties. At each of these meetings a sermon was to be delivered on some doctrinal subject, such as the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, the Atonement, original sin, justification, &c. Yet, notwithstanding these dissensions, the two parties were still considered as one denomination, and the most moderate on both sides associated with each other; but things were ripening year after year for a final and total separation. About the year 1769 the members of the Quarterly Association drew up a document, embodying the distinguishing doctrines of Calvinism, which they all subscribed. That gave offence to some ministers, who occasionally attended the meetings, but were not members of the Association, and occasioned the publication of a protest by Dr. Jenkins, of Caermarthen, and others, against subscribing to human creeds, with some severe reflections on the conduct of the members of the Association. A masterly reply to that “Protest,” written probably by Dr. Benjamin Davies, then the tutor of the Academy at Abergavenny, was published in 1771, under the title, “A Vindication of the Conduct of the Associated Ministers in Wales, with some Remarks on the late Declaration and Protest.”

¹ Thomas Morgan's MSS.

This paper war brought about a very painful, but, under the circumstances, a most desirable result—the total separation of the Pelagian and Calvinistic parties, whose constant wranglings for about forty years had almost ruined some of the most flourishing congregations in the Principality.

Ever since the Restoration, the names *Presbyterian* and *Independent* were applied indiscriminately to all the Pædobaptist congregations in Wales; but after the separation of the Pelagians from the Calvinists the former party has been distinguished as Presbyterians, and the latter as Independents. There were among the Presbyterians, at the time of their separation, a number of ministers eminent for their learning and respectability, such as Dr. Jenkins, of Caermarthen, Messrs. David Lloyd, of Llwynrhydowen, Evan Griffiths, of Capel Sion, Solomon Harries, of Swansea, Josiah Rees, of Gellyonen, Samuel Davies, of Merthyr Tydvil, and others; but their cause, for some reason or other, never prospered. From Pelagianism most of them proceeded to Arianism, and early in the present century to Unitarianism. The Independents, on the other hand, have continued to gain strength from the year 1771 to the present time.

The Antipædobaptist body, after the expulsion of Abel Francis in 1734, and Charles Winter in 1749, on account of their Arminianism, had no trouble from diversity of sentiments until the year 1796, when Mr. J. R. Jones, of Ramoth, in Merionethshire, a very talented young minister, introduced Sandemanianism into the infant churches in North Wales. His influence did not reach South Wales; but his singular views, together with his superior talents and perseverance, proved most ruinous to the newly-formed and promising interests in the counties of Merioneth, Denbigh, Anglesea, and Caernarvon. Christmas Evans, then in the thirtieth year of his age, became one of his adherents for some time, but Evans's ardent desire to save souls would not allow him to follow Jones in all his punctilious observance of trifling ceremonies, to the neglect of infinitely weightier matters. After prolonged disputes, and repeated attempts, especially on the part of Evans, to reconcile the contending parties, Jones

separated himself "from the Babylonish Welsh Baptists, and in conscience he separated himself from their errors in doctrine and practice, in order to unite himself to the brethren in Scotland, who received the truth."¹

While the churches in North Wales were thus troubled by Sandemanianism, those in the South, about the same time, were still more seriously agitated by Pelagianism. The leader in that agitation was Mr. (afterwards Dr.) William Richards, of Lynn, in Norfolk. Mr. Richards was accustomed, for several years, to pay annual visits to his friends and relations in Wales. During those visits he used all his influence and opportunities to propagate his Pelagian or Arian sentiments, and at length succeeded in inducing several ministers and their congregations to secede from the Calvinistic Antipædobaptist Association, and set up a general or Arminian connexion. One or two of those congregations became professed Arians, while the others, who did not proceed further than Arminianism, early in the present century rejoined their Calvinistic friends.²

Mr. Josiah Thompson, of London, an eminent Antipædobaptist minister, collected the statistics of the Nonconformists throughout England and Wales, between the years 1772 and 1775. According to the returns which he procured, the number of the Independent and Presbyterian churches in Wales at that time was 111, and those of the Antipædobaptists 25. The churches of the latter denomination had 60 places of worship, and 3,007 communicants.³

With all their troubles, both external and internal, the churches in Wales, during this period, were blessed with more remarkable and repeated sessions of revival than at any former period. The great revival which had actually begun in 1730, broke out with irresistible power in 1735, and continued to progress, almost unabated, till 1745 or 1746. From that time to the year 1760 we have no account of any revival. The unhappy dispute between Harries and Rowlands retarded the

¹ Stephen's "Memoirs of Christmas Evans," p. 56.

² Evans's "Memoirs of Dr. Richards," pp. 103-116.

³ Thompson's MSS. at Dr. Williams' Library.

progress of religion, not only in the Methodist body, but also in the other denominations. About the year 1760 the Lord began to revisit His people, and many were added to the churches.¹ A powerful revival commenced at Llangeitho in 1762, and soon spread over the whole country. Edmund Jones, of Pontypool, in a letter to H. Harries, dated Nov. 19, 1772, gives an encouraging account of a revival in the counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth, originated and carried on chiefly through the instrumentality of remarkably gifted "praying brethren" belonging to the church at Groeswen, near Caerphilly. "I hear," he writes, "that there are about twenty such praying persons that way. They are almost every night somewhere or other. Prejudice against religion goes down everywhere. They go, and they sometimes go far, and some are converted in hearing them. I wonder not at it, because the Lord is strongly with them. There is some uncommon work about the river Rhymney, from Ystrad bridge to Machen Forge, and below. Blessed be God. All Caerphilly town come to hear; that beautiful country about Caerphilly is become a Beulah. The meeting-house in Newport, though very large, cannot contain the people sometimes. Mr. T. Saunders, the minister, prospers greatly there, and at St. Bride's and Machen Forge." Astonishing effects attended the evangelical preaching of Mr. David Jones, of Llangan, and other Methodists in South Wales; while the evangelistic labours and benevolent schemes of the excellent Charles, of Bala, and his coadjutors in the North, produced the most blessed effects. Mr. Charles, in a letter dated September, 1791, describes the work then going on in North Wales in the following terms:—"You inquire about the state of the churches in Wales. I have nothing but what is favourable to communicate. We had lately a very comfortable Association at Pwllheli; some thousands attended, more than ever was seen before. And here at Bala, we have had a very great, powerful, and glorious outpouring of the Spirit on the people in general, especially on children and young people. Scores of the wildest and most inconsiderate of young people of both sexes have been awakened. Their

¹ Thomas's History of the Association.

convictions have been very clear and powerful ; and in some instances so deep as to bring them to the brink of despair. Their consolations also have been equally strong. If the Lord should be graciously pleased to continue the work as it has prevailed some weeks past, the devil's kingdom will be in ruins in this neighbourhood. Ride on, ride on, Thou King of glory, is the fervent cry of my soul, day and night. I verily believe that the Lord means to give the kingdom of darkness a dreadful shake ; for He takes off its pillars. Those that were foremost in the service of Satan and rebellion against God are now the foremost in seeking salvation through the blood of the Lamb. It is an easy work to preach the gospel of the kingdom here at this time. Divine truths have their own infinite weight and importance on the minds of the people. Beams of divine light, together with divine, irresistible energy, accompany every truth delivered. It is glorious to see how the stoutest hearts are bowed down, and the hardest melted. I would not have been without seeing what I have lately seen, no, not for the world.

“These are the blessed things I have to relate to you, my dear brother, respecting poor Wales. The charity schools here are abundantly blessed. Children, that were aforetime like jewels buried in rubbish, now appear with divine lustre and transcendent beauty. Little children from six to twelve years of age are affected, astonished, and overpowered. Their young minds day and night are filled with nothing but soul concerns. All I say is matter of fact. I have not exaggerated in the least degree, nor related but a small part of the whole. The Lord hath done great things for us, and to Him be all the praise.”¹

About the year 1787, Mr. David Davies, of Llangeler (afterwards of Swansea), and the celebrated Christmas Evans, began to exercise their gifts as preachers in the Vale of Teifi, on the borders of the counties of Caermarthen and Cardigan, and immediately excited considerable attention by their superior oratorical powers, and the extraordinary amount of divine influence which almost everywhere attended their ministrations. Providence soon led Evans to North Wales, where he was the

¹ Morgan's *Life of Charles*. Third edition, pp. 282, 283.

means of accomplishing wondrous things in the vineyard of his Lord ; and Davies for nearly thirty years laboured in South Wales, with remarkable success.

Even a very condensed account of all the revivals with which the Welsh churches were blessed, from 1730 to 1800, would take up more space than we can afford to give it. Mr. D. Rowlands is said to have seen no less than seven awakenings during his ministry, from 1735 to 1790. The last ten years of the eighteenth century were an almost unbroken season of revivals.

The Welsh revivals have often been most grossly misrepresented and caricatured by irreligious persons, and cold or squeamish religionists. Even in such a respectable work as "Buck's Theological Dictionary," under the word *jumpers*, Welsh preachers are accused of encouraging the people to cry out, put themselves in violent agitation, and *jump* until they were quite exhausted. The English public have repeatedly been duped by designing parties, the avowed enemies of evangelical religion or Nonconformity, to believe these and similar strange stories. It is true that the irresistible effect of the eloquence of some preachers, when evidently attended by divine influence, have often so overpowered congregations, that some persons, being convinced of their lost condition as sinners, would cry out in an agony, while others would be thrown into such ecstasies of joy as to be unable to contain themselves ; and when so excited, would kneel, lay prostrate on the ground, jump, clap their hands, pray, repeat verses of hymns or texts of Scripture, &c. ; in a word, persons in such an uncontrollable state of excitement know not what they do or say. Multitudes of strong, muscular men have frequently been forced unconsciously, by the thundering eloquence and the awful earnestness of Howell Harries, to scream and faint away. The pathos and remarkable unction of Daniel Rowlands's preaching would, at times, so absorb his hearers, that they would forget themselves and everything around them. It is said that he preached, on one occasion, for six or seven hours without a pause ; and that neither himself nor the people perceived that the service was longer than usual. David Morris, of Cardiganshire, was once

preaching in the street at Bridgend, Glamorganshire, on the "Day of Judgment," and the sermon had such an effect on the hearers, that they ran wildly through the town, thinking that that solemn day had actually come! About sixty-five years ago, Williams of Wern, in a sermon on the resurrection of the dead, delivered from the window of Ynysgau Chapel, Merthyr Tydvil, had so riveted the attention of the vast multitude who stood on the burying-ground before him, that when he reached the climax, all the crowd moved together in terror, imagining that the graves under their feet were bursting open, and the dead rising.

Similar effects have often attended the preaching of David Davies, of Swansea, John Elias, Christmas Evans, Ebenezer Morris, and others. We could admire neither the piety nor the philosophy of the man who would assert that such effects were produced *designedly* by the preachers, or that the people had power to restrain their feelings. We merely state facts, and let those who can account for them. It is readily admitted that the Welsh people are naturally excitable, but scenes similar to the forementioned have occasionally been witnessed among other nations as well as the Welsh.

We do not aim to conceal the mournful fact that Satan has always attempted to make use of revival excitements in Wales, as he has done everywhere else, to carry on his infernal designs, and that he has been in many instances too successful; but to hold up revivals, and the excitements which naturally accompany them, as subjects for ridicule on those accounts, does not argue a high degree of piety or wisdom in the parties that do so.

The Circulating Welsh Schools, set up by Mr. Griffith Jones, gradually declined after his death; and at the death of his friend, Madame Bevan, in 1779, were given up altogether. The first, after Mr. Jones, who attempted to furnish the poor classes in Wales with the means of religious education on a large scale, was Dr. Edward Williams, then minister of the Independent church at Oswestry. Assisted by the contributions of some generous English friends, he opened a few *Sunday schools* in North Wales in the year 1786. These schools were afterwards

converted into Circulating Day Schools, under the superintendence of Dr. George Lewis, of Llanuwchllyn. The scheme met with a considerable degree of support, so that by the year 1799 thirteen masters were employed, who had 553 scholars under their care.

In the year 1788,¹ the benevolent Charles, of Bala, set up a few day and Sunday schools, on the same principle as those of Dr. Williams. These "seminaries," as he calls them, under his able management soon increased in number and efficiency, and have proved an incalculable blessing in the Principality.

While Williams, Lewis, and Charles were thus labouring for the benefit of North Wales, Mr. Morgan John Rees, of Pontypool, a most talented and energetic Antipædobaptist minister, was actively engaged in the same work in South Wales. He got school books in the Welsh language printed, and then visited different localities, far and near, to establish night schools for the working classes, and Sunday schools as well.

To the inestimable loss of the Principality, Dr. Edward Williams soon removed to a distant part of England, and Mr. M. J. Rees emigrated to America in 1794. The establishment of Sunday schools in Wales was then left to Mr. Charles alone, and he did it so efficiently, that the honour of setting such a noble scheme afloat is due to him chiefly.

Sunday schools were not then new in Wales. We find in a manuscript written in 1720, by one Morgan John, of Morriston, near Swansea, that he had learned to read at the Independent Sunday school at Tyrdwncyn, in that neighbourhood, in 1697, and that the Independent church at Neath also had a Sunday school at that time. These schools were probably catechetical meetings, such as every Nonconforming church in that age held

¹ We have dated the commencement of Mr. Charles's schools, on the authority of a letter written by him, August 5, 1797. In another letter, dated September 12, 1808, he says that "the work began in 1785." Our reason for preferring the date given in the text is, that Mr. Charles would be more likely to have a distinct recollection of the time when the schools were commenced in 1797 than in 1808. But the discrepancy may have arisen from the unwarrantable liberty which his biographers evidently took to mutilate his manuscripts. In the copy of the letter of August 5, 1797, as given by his biographer, Mr. Morgan, the words "nine years ago" are changed into "thirteen years ago."

regularly once a week. But Sunday schools in the modern form were not set up generally in the Principality till the close of the last century. In the present day they are of such importance, in the estimation of the Nonconforming churches of all denominations, that there is hardly a church in the whole of Wales without its Sunday school.¹

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

TIMOTHY THOMAS,

An eminent minister of the Antipædobaptist persuasion, was born at Tyhên, in the parish of Caio, Caermarthenshire, in 1720. In the twentieth year of his age he was called to the ministry by the church which met at Aberduar, and various other places in the counties of Caermarthen and Cardigan, and was ordained one of the pastors of that church in 1743. He was remarkably diligent and acceptable as a preacher, known and respected by all the churches, particularly those of his own denomination, throughout the Principality. Notwithstanding his unceasing labours as pastor of a church scattered over a vast extent of hilly country, his repeated visits to other congregations, and the very delicate state of his health through life, he found time to write and publish several useful books in the Welsh language, the ablest and most generally known of which is the "*Wisg wen Ddysglaer*," *i.e.*, "The White Shining Robe." This is a volume of considerable size, and consists of valuable essays on the fall of man, justification, and sanctification. Mr. Thomas died in the prime of life, November 12, 1768. Two of his sons became eminent and useful ministers—Mr. Thomas Thomas, of Peckham, near London, and Mr. Timothy Thomas, of Aberduar, Caermarthenshire.²

WILLIAM PRICHARD.

This good man, though neither a minister, a preacher, nor a literary character, is as well entitled to a respectful notice as

¹ *Evangelical Magazine* for 1798, pp. 29, 231. Hanes Bywyd, John Jenkins, D.D., p. 13.

² "*Hanes y Bedyddwyr*," pp. 406-409.

any of his distinguished contemporaries, on account of his ardent piety, his eminent usefulness, his unswerving adherence to his principles, and his unparalleled sufferings. He was born at Brynrhydd, in the parish of Llanarmon, Caernarvonshire, in the year 1702. He was better educated than the generality of farmers' sons at that time, and is said to have been a good Welsh and English scholar, and not a mean proficient in Latin also. After his marriage, he settled as a tenant farmer at Glasfrynawr, in the parish of Llanybi, near Pwllheli. For some years after becoming the head of a family he was a man of the world, and conformed to its sinful habits. His conversion was effected under the following singular circumstances:—Farmers in that locality were then in the habit of going from the Sunday afternoon service at the parish church to the village alehouse, where they would drink together for several hours. William Prichard, one Sunday night, stayed at the tavern till a late hour. On his way home, the night being dark, he missed the path, and having wandered in the fields for a considerable time, he saw a light from a window at some distance, and made his way towards it. When he reached the place he found himself in the yard of a neighbouring farmhouse, where one Francis Evans, a pious Nonconformist, resided. He then made a second attempt to direct his steps homewards, but again lost his way; and, to his astonishment, returned to the same farm-house as before. Without acquainting the family of his difficulty, he made a third trial, which also proved equally unsuccessful; and after walking to and fro until he was quite tired he again saw a light, which he imagined must have been different to the one he had seen before; but when he came near it he found that it was the same. He now began to think that there was something strange and significant in the case. Standing outside the window, he understood that the good man of the house was conducting family worship. The chapter he was reading was the fifth of the Evangelist Matthew. After making a few remarks on some verses of the chapter, he engaged in prayer, every word of which was distinctly heard by his neighbour outside. His remarkably earnest supplications on behalf of

his ungodly neighbours sunk deeply to the heart of William Prichard ; who, as soon as the prayer was over, walked quietly away, and found his way home without any further difficulty. His singular case that night, together with the prayer he was thus led to listen to, left an indelible impression upon his mind, and from that time he became an altered man. He at once broke off all connection with his sinful companions, and soon began to exert his influence to put down the wicked practices of the neighbourhood. In the first year of his religious life two of his servants were converted, by observing him retiring to secret places for prayer. He continued for some time after his conversion to attend the parish church, but associated often with the members of the Independent church at Pwllheli.

About the year 1738, or 1739, Mr. Lewis Rees, of Llanbrynmair, visited Pwllheli, and informed the religious people there of a pious schoolmaster, who was also a noted preacher, then stationed at Llanuwchllyn, in Merionethshire, advising them to send for him to their neighbourhood, where his services were greatly needed. The forementioned Francis Evans went all the way to Llanuwchllyn to invite him, and had the satisfaction of returning with him to Caernarvonshire.* Being one of Mr. Griffith Jones's schoolmasters, it was thought advisable to apply for the clergyman's permission for him to keep the school in the church, or the schoolroom attached to it. William Prichard, being till that time a churchman, was fixed upon as the most proper person to wait upon the reverend gentleman. Having stated the case to him—that a clergyman from South Wales had sent a schoolmaster to the parish to

* The schoolmaster's name was Jenkin Morgan. He was a native of Glamorganshire, and originally a member of the Presbyterian Church at Watford, near Caerphilly. He was for some years employed by Mr. Griffith Jones as teacher of his Welsh schools. After his settlement in Caernarvonshire, he married a pious young woman there ; and on William Prichard's removal to Anglesea, he accompanied him to that county. There he succeeded, amidst the most cruel persecution, in gathering an Independent church at Rhosymeirch, near Llangefni. He was ordained in his mother church at Watford to be the pastor of the congregation which he had gathered in Anglesea, in the spring of the year 1746. Mr. Lewis Rees preached the ordination sermon, and Mr. Edmund Jones gave the charge. Mr. Morgan was one of the most successful preachers of the age ; remarkable effects at times attended his preaching.—*Thomas Morgan's MSS.*

teach a Welsh school, which the poor and their children greatly needed, and that he and many of the other parishioners would feel obliged for permission to keep the school in the church, the clergyman, suspecting that the schoolmaster was one of the religionists, at once indignantly refused it. "Well," said William Prichard, "if you have authority over the church, I am master of my own kitchen, he shall keep it there ;" and the school was soon after opened in the kitchen at Glasfryn-fawr. Several children and some adults attended it. Mr. Prichard then left the Established Church, and joined the Independent church at Pwllheli. Both himself and the schoolmaster were unsparingly abused and slandered, and the most absurd stories were spread and believed concerning them, such as that they were teaching the most dangerous doctrines ; that they were forming a conspiracy against the king and the government ; that they had engaged a ship from some foreign country, which was soon to come to a neighbouring port, to take away all the children attending the school, to be sold as slaves ; that they committed adultery and every kind of uncleanness at their meetings, &c. !!

About that time, William Prichard went to hear the notorious Chancellor Owen. In the churchyard, after the service, a neighbour asked him how he liked the Chancellor's discourse ; to which he replied, "I did not like it at all ; for he said many things contrary to the word of God." That remark was carried to the Chancellor, who immediately instituted proceedings against Mr. Prichard in the Ecclesiastical Court, for his presumption in making such a remark respecting his sermon ; and the burden of his charge was, that he gave utterance to those words within the limits of "the consecrated ground." Having been harassed in the Spiritual Court for two or three years, through the assistance of one Councillor Williams, of Tyfry, in Anglesea, the case was raised to the Civil Court, and there decided in favour of the defendant. The revengeful Chancellor then, to vent his malice, induced Mr. Prichard's landlord to give him notice to quit his farm. Not being able to get another in Caernarvonshire, he rented Plaspenmynydd Farm, in Anglesea. When he went there, the report had gone

before him that he had some strange new religion, and that it was so dangerous to hold any intercourse with him, that any who would do so would at once become deranged ! The clergy, all to a man, did everything they could to prejudice his neighbours' minds against him, and succeeded to such a degree, that the good man's life and property were always in danger. Crowds of people would come in the night and destroy his ploughs, harrows, and other farming implements, and his neighbours would drive their cattle to his hay and corn : even his servants, while at work, were shot at. One Saturday night some of his persecutors, imagining that they had seen him going home, accompanied by a preacher, gathered a mob of about 250 persons, armed with clubs, staves, and knives, and went to his house the following morning. Mr. Prichard happened to be in Caernarvonshire that Sabbath ; the servants also had gone that morning to the parish church, so that only Mrs. Prichard, with an infant two months old, and one servant girl, were there to face the ruffians. The leader, when they came to the door, said to the trembling woman—"Where is thy roundhead and his preacher ? we are come here to kill them !" She replied—"If a roundhead you call him, he is not here to-day." Finding that they had been disappointed of their prey, they broke all the windows, mixed the wheat, barley, and oats in the granary ; destroyed everything in the stables and cow-houses, and did all the mischief they could. When Mr. Prichard returned, and learnt what had occurred in his absence, he made up his mind to prosecute his persecutors, seeing that his patient suffering only made them the more daring and cruel. He employed an attorney from Denbighshire, and the case was tried at the assize at Shrewsbury. Several of the ringleaders were punished, and others absconded ; but the innocent man's troubles were not yet nearly over. His landlord was persuaded to turn him out of the farm in 1745. Having yet more service to render to the cause of his God in Anglesea, his enemies were not permitted to drive him out of the county. He removed from Plaspenmynydd to Bodlewfawr, in the parish of Llanddaniel. In that locality again he found his new neighbours quite as

cruel as those whom he had left. Such was his danger, that he dared not go out of his house without a large dog to follow him for his defence. The clergy would take him up in the fairs and markets, calling him a schismatic, a heretic, the enemy of the Church, &c., in order to incite the mob to attack him. A man once bought a large knife at Caernarvon for the purpose of killing him, and went one morning to his house with the intention of executing his murderous design. When he entered the house, Mr. Prichard was engaged in family worship. The man sat still until he had finished, but in the meantime was so affected by his prayer, that he could not think of doing him any harm. He confessed his villainous intention, and begged Mr. Prichard's pardon, saying that he had been led to think he was quite a different man from what he found him to be ; and that he would not, as long as he lived, annoy him nor any other man, for his religion.

The clergy were the real cause of all the troubles which William Prichard and his friends were subjected to. They persuaded the ignorant populace to believe that the Nonconformists and the Methodists were incarnate devils, and that they were, by persecuting them, rendering signal service to God and their country.

In November, 1750, William Prichard had to quit his farm at Bodlewfawr. His landlady, most probably acting in accordance with the instruction of a clerical adviser, thought that the safety of the Church of England required her to send such a dangerous schismatic from the parish. His prospects then appeared darker than ever. Not one of the landed proprietors of the counties of Caernarvon and Anglesea, as he thought, would let him a farm. However, having heard that William Bulkeley, Esq., of Bryndu, in Anglesea, had a farm to let, he ventured to ask for it. The gentleman received him very kindly, and asked him what was the reason that he had been turned out from three farms in succession? "Is it because you have not paid your rent?" "No, sir," said Prichard, "it was only on account of my religion ; because I am a Dissenter from the Church of England." "If that is the only thing they had against you," said Mr. Bulkeley, "I will let you as many

farms as you like." He then leased him the farm called Clwchdyrnog, and there the good man spent the remaining years of his life, without being subjected to much farther trouble.

The history of William Prichard is the history of the rise of Nonconformity in Anglesea. Though Mr. Daniel Phillips, of Pwllheli, had a preaching station in this county thirty years before his time, yet it does not appear that he attracted much notice, nor that he succeeded in gathering a permanent congregation anywhere within the island. The church at Rhosymeirch, gathered by Mr. Jenkin Morgan, was the first Dissenting interest in the county. Mr. Morgan, as well as his patron, Mr. Prichard, was a great sufferer, "being much harassed by the clergy in the Bishop's Court for many years." Both these good men, especially Mr. Prichard, lived to see an abundant harvest from the seed which they had sown in tears. The congregation at Rhosymeirch, with its various branches in different parts of the county, consisted of above 800 persons at the time of William Prichard's death, which occurred on the 9th of March, 1773.¹

DAVID JONES.

This remarkable character was born at Cwmcogerddan, in the parish of Caio, Caermarthenshire, in the year 1711. His father was the proprietor of two farms; one of which he left to him, and the other to his brother Samuel. We are not informed where and under whom he was educated, but it is certain that he was a better scholar than most, if not all, the Caermarthenshire farmers of that age. His talents, especially his poetical gifts, were of a very high order, but they were kept from the service of religion until he was between thirty and forty years of age. His conversion is said to have taken place under the following circumstances:—Being a cattle-dealer, he often attended the English fairs and markets. One Sunday morning, on his return from England, while passing Troedrihiwdalar, an Independent chapel, near Builth, the melodious singing of the congregation had so affected him that he could

¹ "Drych yr Amseroedd," pp. 90-99. Thompson's MSS.

not pursue his journey. Tying his horse to the gate, he turned into the chapel, and the sermon which he heard there proved the means of his conversion. He soon after joined the Independent church at Crugybar, in his own neighbourhood, and continued a most useful and active member of it to the day of his death.

The great work which has immortalized his name is his masterly translation of Watts's Psalms and Hymns. The first edition of the Psalms was published in 1753, and that of the Hymns in 1775. He also published in three parts, in the years 1763, 1764, and 1770, one hundred and sixty-seven original hymns, some of which are of the finest poetical compositions in the Welsh language. David Jones is to be ranked next to the sweet singer of Pantycelyn as a Welsh hymnologist. In his translation of Watts's, he has in some instances excelled the great English poet. Hundreds of his choice hymns and happy translations will live as long as the language of Cambria.

He was a most warm-hearted and active Christian, and remarkably gifted in prayer. Besides efficiently superintending his temporal concerns as a large farmer, composing and translating hymns, and discharging the duties of a deacon in the church at Crugybar, he found time occasionally to accompany ministers in their preaching excursions to distant parts of the country; and his presence at some places proved remarkably serviceable, as the following instance shows :—Mr. W. Perkins, of Pencadair, having been announced to preach at a house called *the Pound*, near Lampeter bridge, Cardiganshire, a gentleman who resided in the neighbourhood, an avowed enemy of the Nonconformists, hired a number of ruffians to go and disturb the meeting. They rudely entered the house, and dragged the preacher and the hearers to the street. David Jones, who was one of the congregation, fell on his knees in the street, and began to pray with such extraordinary power and effect, that the disturbers were struck with terror. When he concluded his prayer, the preacher resumed his work, and no one attempted to disturb him.

Mr. Jones was twice married, and had a family of seven

daughters. In the year 1764 he removed from Cwmcogerddan, his own estate, to Havodgleddau, in the parish of Llanwrda, an estate belonging to his second wife. He finished his useful career August 30, 1777, in the 66th year of his age, and was buried at Crugybar.¹

DAVID MORRIS,

A celebrated Methodist preacher, was born at Lledrod, in Cardiganshire, in the year 1744. Of his early history we know nothing. He began to preach in the 21st year of his age, and soon became one of the most popular preachers in the Principality. It does not appear that there was anything extraordinary in his sermons, as compositions, but his remarks on the Scriptures which he quoted were so appropriate and striking; his appeals to the consciences of his hearers so searching and grasping; and his voice so strong, penetrating, solemn, and melodious, that no language can adequately describe the wonderful effect of his preaching on his overflowing congregations. We have already referred to the astonishing power which attended a sermon of his at Bridgend, in Glamorganshire. Something similar occurred while he was preaching near Pont Rippont, in Anglesea, from those words, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The effect of that sermon on the congregation is compared to the explosion of powder shattering the rock. Some fainted, others screamed, and all felt terrified, as if they were summoned to stand in the presence of their Judge. A number of similar instances might be given. There is hardly a locality in the Principality without traditions of some extraordinary effects attending David Morris's preaching. He generally preached in the open air, as there were only a few chapels in Wales large enough to contain the multitudes who everywhere thronged to hear him.

In the year 1774 he removed from Lledrod to the neighbourhood of Twrgwyn, near Newcastle Emlyn. Though constantly engaged in travelling and preaching throughout South and North Wales, he became excessively corpulent,

¹ "Yr Adolygydd," vol. ii. pp. 475-495.

while comparatively a young man, and his corpulence increased from year to year until it caused his death, on the 17th of September, 1791, at the early age of 47 years. His still more celebrated son, Mr. Ebenezer Morris, had begun to preach before his father's death. Some account of him will be given in the next chapter.¹

EDMUND JONES.

This excellent and extraordinary man was born at Penyllwyn, in the parish of Aberystroth, Monmouthshire, April 1, 1702. His parents were members of the Independent church at Penmain, and their son, at an early age, was admitted to the communion of the same church. His father, not being in affluent circumstances, could not give him such education as his abilities and studious disposition would have turned to a good account. A few years at a school, kept by the curate of his native parish, appear to have been all the educational advantages he ever enjoyed.

In the twenty-second year of his age he began to exercise his gifts as a preacher, and after preaching as a candidate for ten years, during which time he repeatedly visited most of the Nonconforming congregations throughout Wales, he was ordained at Penmain as an assistant to his pastor. He confined his pastoral labours chiefly to that branch of the church which met at different places in the parish of Aberystroth. Soon after, if not before his ordination, he began to preach regularly in the neighbourhood of Pontypool, where he gathered a congregation and formed a church. He took up his residence at a place called *The Transh*, in that neighbourhood, in July, 1740, and dwelt there during the remaining years of his life. In 1741 he set about building a place of worship for his newly-formed church and congregation there. Most of the members appear to have been too poor to render him much assistance. Forty pounds was all the money he had in the world, and of that sum he gave thirty towards the erection of the chapel. He afterwards sold fifteen pounds' worth of his books to get what was needed to finish it. Mr. Whitefield, in a letter which

¹ "Methodistiaeth Cymru," vol. ii. pp. 83-87.

he wrote at Abergavenny, May 27, 1749, feelingly refers to that circumstance :—"On Thursday, I saw Mr. E. J., the Dissenting minister I before spoke of, and found him very meanly apparelled. He is a most worthy man, and from his zeal for God some time ago, he sold fifteen pounds' worth of his books to finish a small meeting-house in which he preaches. He has but three pounds per annum from the fund, and about as much from his people. He lives very low, but enjoys much of God, and has as great understanding in the figurative parts of Scripture as any one I know of in the world. He is a Zachary, and his wife an Elizabeth. Four or five guineas might be well bestowed on them. What a scene will be at the great day ! How many a rich priest will stand confounded, whilst the poor, despised, faithful ministers of Christ shall enter, after all their tribulation, into the joy of their Lord." ¹

Mr. Jones married when young, but never had children. Few, if any, ministers have been more happy than he in the conjugal relation. His "dear spouse," as he used to call her, was a woman eminent for her piety, amiable temper, and intellectual powers. Whitefield spent a night under their humble roof, and was so struck with their happiness, that he made up his mind to look out immediately for a wife. Before leaving the neighbourhood, he made choice of a Mrs. James, of Abergavenny ; but to his sad disappointment he found, when it was too late, that he did not find a Mrs. Jones in Mrs. James. Mr. Jones was bereaved of his excellent wife in July or August, 1768. What the good old man felt at the loss of such a wife, it is impossible for words to describe. Though she died twenty-five years before him, he scarcely ever mentioned her name but tears involuntarily flowed from his eyes. When contemplating the joys of heaven, he frequently anticipated the pleasing interview with her. "I would not," he said, "for half a heaven but find her there."

Edmund Jones was one of the most active and useful ministers of his age. His diaries for nine years are now before us ; from which we find that he preached 104 times in 1731 ; 76 in 1732 ; 240 in 1739 ; 300 in 1768 ; 337 in 1770 ; 511

¹ Whitefield's "Letters," vol. ii. p. 260. Ed. 1772.

in 1773; 260 in 1778; 340 in 1780; and even in 1789, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, he preached no less than 405 times. He was not a popular preacher, for "his voice was rather feeble and his delivery slow," but the thorough evangelical character of his doctrine, his puritanical style of preaching, the ardency of his piety, and "the dignity of an apostle which was stamped upon his countenance," demanded attention to his person and message wherever he would go.

He continued remarkably active and useful to the last. In the eightieth year of his age he travelled on foot about four hundred miles through North Wales, preaching twice a day. But at length his constitution, strong as it was, gave way, and for nearly a year previous to his death he was confined to his house, and mostly to his bed. During the last week of his life, though suffering the most excruciating pain in his body, his mind was in a remarkably heavenly frame. Mr. Jayne, one of his deacons, standing at his bedside a few hours before his death, asked him—"Do you fear death, Mr. Jones?" Though having been for some time unable to speak, he returned the following answer to that question with particular emphasis:—"I fear death! No, I know too much of Jesus Christ to fear death. It is in itself terrible, but I do not fear it." When asked by another friend how it was with his soul? he replied, "The heavenly country is clearly in view; there is no cloud nor fear between me and glory." Thus died this venerable patriarch, on the 26th of November, 1793, in the 92nd year of his age, and the 69th of his ministry. He was buried in his own chapel, and Mr. John Griffiths, of Abergavenny, preached his funeral sermon to a large and weeping congregation, from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8—a text which he himself had selected.

He was a poor man all his lifetime, receiving only about £10 a year from his people, and occasional donations from the funds and a few private friends; but such was his charitable disposition, that he would often give the last penny in his possession to the poor. He even took off some of his clothes to give to a half-naked person whom he met on the mountain on a cold day. He had nothing to give in his will but his library, which

was large and valuable. A part of it he bequeathed for the use of his successors in the ministry at Ebenezer Chapel, and the other part to his sister's son. Unfortunately, all his manuscripts, among which was a history of the first fifty years of his own life, were given to his nephew, who was not capable of appreciating their value. He sold two cartloads of them to a grocer at Pontypool as waste paper! Mr. David Thomas, of Pontypool, rescued a few of them from that wholesale destruction, and the contents of those few lead us to infer that what has been destroyed contained a vast amount of information respecting the early history of Welsh Nonconformity.

Mr. Jones wrote several small works. His English productions are—"A Funeral Sermon for Mr. Evan Williams, with an interesting Account of his Life;" "The History of the Parish of Aberystroth," "Sermons on 'Noah's Ark,' 'Samson's Hair,' and 'The Light of the Gospel,'" and "*A History of Apparitions in Wales.*" The "History of Apparitions" is a very curious production, full of very strange ghost stories, such as no nervous person should read in the night. Many have ridiculed the good man for writing such a book; but before classifying the venerable Welsh patriarch with credulous, weak-minded persons, it should be borne in mind that some of England's greatest men were quite as firm believers in apparitions as he was. Richard Baxter and John Wesley would, without the least hesitation, have believed every story in his book. The religious spirit which pervades the whole work, and the object of the author in writing it—to arrest the progress of scepticism—were good, whatever may be thought of the adaptation of the means which he used to attain his object.

Edmund Jones was respected and loved by all who knew him and had hearts to love unaffected piety, active philanthropy, and an amiable temper. We cannot better conclude this short account of him than in the words of the Countess of Huntingdon, whose college at Trefecca he often visited:—"The dear, good old prophet¹ has just left us. Oh what a

¹ Mr. Jones had foretold many things which were literally fulfilled many years after, so that some of his contemporaries believed that he was endowed with the gift of prophecy.

blessed saint of God ! how devoted ! how lively ! how active ! always athirst for full communion with the Father of light ! His heart-stirring addresses to the students, and his most fervent and energetic prayers for their success, will surely leave a blessing behind them.”¹

PETER WILLIAMS.

The name of Peter Williams is more familiar to all classes throughout the Principality than that of any of his eminent contemporaries. His “Family Bible” has immortalized it. He was born near Laugharne, in Caermarthenshire, January 7, 1722. His mother was a decidedly religious character, and a regular attendant on the ministry of Mr. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror. Both his father and mother died when he was about twelve years of age ; but the pious instructions of his mother had left a lasting impression on his youthful mind. A maternal uncle took him under his care after the death of his parents. In the seventeenth year of his age he was placed at a clerical grammar school at Caermarthen, to be educated for the ministry in the Established Church. He remained there for three years, and, as it appears, made good use of his time ; for soon after leaving school he wrote a Latin letter to his tutor, to thank him for his instructions. A few months before the expiration of his time at the grammar school, Mr. Whitefield, during one of his preaching excursions through South Wales, visited Caermarthen, and preached in the open air in Lammas Street. That morning the master of the school, who was a clergyman, prohibited all the senior students to go and hear the stranger, who, as he said, went about the country to preach dangerous errors, such as that men must be born again, and that all were to be justified by faith without works ! Notwithstanding their tutor’s prohibition, four of the students, among whom was Peter Williams, ventured to go secretly to hear the sermon. Mr. Whitefield’s text that morning was Isaiah liv. 5. His words were carried by the Spirit of God to the heart of Peter Williams. A change in his conduct and conversation soon became apparent.

¹ E. Jones’s MS. *Evangelical Magazine* for 1794, pp. 177-185. “Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon,” vol. ii. pp. 116 118.

His former associates deserted him, and his prospect of admission into "holy orders" appeared rather dark. However, his tutor, though decidedly opposed to Methodism, yet being a kind-hearted gentleman, concealed his Methodism from the Bishop, and so he received his deacon order in the year 1745. He first settled as curate at Eglwys Gymun, near Laugharne. The rector, who resided in England, when he came down to receive his tithes, found that his curate was too religious, and therefore instantly dismissed him. The charge against him was that he preached original sin, justification by faith, and the necessity of regeneration. He then successively served as curate at Swansea, and Llangranog, in Cardiganshire, for very short periods, and was dismissed from both places for no other crime than his earnest and evangelical style of preaching. Finding that the Bishop would not admit him into priest orders, and that he had not the least prospect of being useful in the Establishment, he joined the Methodists in 1746, and continued to labour among them with remarkable assiduity and success for nearly fifty years. Having already given some account of his disagreement with the Methodists, and his expulsion from the connexion, we have no need to treat that painful subject any further.

During the first twenty years of his ministry among the Methodists he was a great sufferer, especially when he visited North Wales. The treatment which he received at Llanrwst, and other places, is too disgusting to be recorded. If he suffered much from avowed foes in the early years of his public life, his later years were embittered by what he felt still more keenly—persecution from his professed friends. But death at last delivered him from every trouble on the 8th of August, 1796.

As a preacher he greatly excelled all his Methodist brethren, both clerical and lay, in the preparation, arrangement, and compactedness of his sermons. It was the general custom of the Methodist preachers of that age to deliver unpremeditated harangues, but he never appeared before a congregation without a well-prepared discourse. Hence, whether he would have a favourable wind (*hwyl*) or not, he would always acquit himself to the satisfaction of his hearers.

No minister in the eighteenth century did as much as Peter Williams to cultivate religious literature in the Welsh language. The first edition of his "Family Bible," which consisted of 3,600 copies, appeared in 1770; the second, of 6,400 copies, in 1779; and the third, of 4,000 copies, 1796. In 1773 he published his "Scripture Concordance," 2,000 copies of which were soon sold; and in 1790 his "Pocket Edition of the Bible," with Canne's marginal references, appeared. The edition consisted of 4,000 copies. Mr. David Jones, of Dolgoch, an Antipædobaptist minister, rendered him some assistance in this last enterprise. Besides his Bibles and Concordance, he also published translations from the English of several useful works. His incessant labours thus to benefit his countrymen have endeared his name to every friend of religion in the Principality.¹

JOSHUA THOMAS,

The celebrated historian of the Antipædobaptist churches in Wales, was the eldest son of Morgan Thomas, of Tyhen, in the parish of Caio, Caermarthenshire, and brother of Mr. Timothy Thomas, already mentioned. He was born February 22, 1719. His parents, who had been members of the Independent church at Croftycyff for about twenty years, owing to some disagreement with a member of that church, withdrew from its communion in 1737, and joined the Antipædobaptists, who were then endeavouring to establish an interest in that neighbourhood. They were decidedly religious characters, and took particular care to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, three of whom became respectable and useful ministers. Their eldest son, Joshua, in the twentieth year of his age, was apprenticed to a mercer at Hereford. Though at that time not a professor of religion, yet he was seriously disposed. For some time he attended the Presbyterian chapel at Hereford, but being desirous of associating with the denomination his parents had lately joined, and finding that there was no congregation of that persuasion nearer than Leominster, he walked there one Sunday morning in the

¹ Williams's Life, prefixed to his Family Bible.

winter of 1739, and continued to do so every other Sunday afterwards during his stay at Hereford. In May, 1740, he was baptized by immersion, and admitted to the communion of the church at Leominster.

Having served his apprenticeship at Hereford, about the close of the year 1743 he returned to Wales, and remained with his parents for two years. During that time his religious friends urged him to preach, and his ministerial gifts being approved of, he was encouraged to devote himself to the work ; but because of his natural timidity, and fear of rushing uncalled to the sacred office, he refused to preach but very seldom for some years. In 1746 he married a pious young woman, and settled in business at the Hay, in Breconshire. He then joined the church at Maesyerllan, in that county, and in 1749 was ordained as an assistant pastor in that church and its branches. His mother church at Leominster, in 1753, sent for him to supply their pulpit for a few sabbaths. Not being accustomed to preach in the English language, he felt rather reluctant to go there. However, he complied with their request, and his services proving acceptable, he was urged to repeat his visits ; and in November, 1754, accepted an invitation to settle there as pastor, where he usefully spent the remaining forty-three years of his life in that capacity. Finding his annual income inadequate to the support of his increasing family, he opened a day school, which he continued for many years with considerable encouragement. He was remarkably attentive to the right use and proper distribution of his time. For nearly sixty years, upon an average, he was not in bed, summer or winter, later than five o'clock in the morning. His long and eminently useful life came to a close, after a week's illness, on the 25th of August, 1797, in the 79th year of his age. He died in the full enjoyment of the comforts of religion.

His affection for his native country continued ardent and strong to the last. He was accustomed almost every year, during his long pastorate at Leominster, to attend the annual Associations of the Welsh churches, and he took more interest in the history of religion in the land of his fathers than any of his contemporaries.

Joshua Thomas was a sincere friend, an agreeable companion, a most consistent Christian, a devoted minister of the gospel, and a useful though not an eloquent preacher. But his fame chiefly rests on his historical productions. His history of the Antipædobaptist churches in Wales, written in the Welsh language, and published in 1778, is the best work on the history of Nonconformity in the Principality ever written; but being professedly the history of only one denomination, its references to the other denominations are merely incidental. This work, notwithstanding its great value, contains several incorrect statements, such as that an Antipædobaptist church had been formed at Olchon in 1633; that a Mr. William Thomas, "a Baptist," was co-pastor with Mr. Wroth, at Llanvaches; that Mr. Vavasor Powell was an Antipædobaptist from the commencement of his ministry; and that John Penry, William Erbery, Jenkin Jones, and Henry Maurice belonged to the same denomination. Had the industrious author been placed in circumstances to know better, he would never have advanced such statements. During the years 1791-95, his industrious pen furnished valuable articles to the Baptist Register, on the history of the Baptist Association in Wales, from 1650 to 1790. These were afterwards published as a separate pamphlet. He also left in manuscript, "A History of the Welsh Baptists," which is, probably, a translation of the forementioned Welsh work; and an Ecclesiastical History of Wales. These manuscripts, which are undoubtedly very valuable, we have not been able to find, after repeated inquiries about them in London and Bristol.

Mr. Thomas left one son in the ministry—the late Mr. Timothy Thomas, of Islington.¹

LEWIS REES.

This eminent minister was born at Glanrhwydre, or Glynllwydrew, in the Vale of Neath, Glamorganshire, March 2, 1710. His parents were members of the Independent church at Blaengwrach, then under the pastoral care of the amiable

¹ "Hanes y Bedyddwyr," pp. 99, 100, 406. *Evangelical Magazine* for 1798, pp. 89-90. *Seren Gomer* for 1822, pp. 65-70.

Henry Davies. Their son, at an early age, was admitted to the communion of the church. His piety, talents, and especially his gift in prayer, induced his friends to advise him to devote himself to the work of the ministry. With that view he studied for short periods successively under his own pastor, Mr. Davies; Mr. Joseph Simons, of Neath, who then kept a grammar school at Swansea; and Mr. Rees Price, of Bridgend, the father of the celebrated Dr. Richard Price, of London. Mr. Price recommended him to the Welsh Academy, then kept at Maesgwyn, in Radnorshire, under the presidency of Mr. Vavasor Griffiths. When he had been there only a few months, his pious tutor, finding that he was a remarkably devoted young man, and already a good scholar, and that there was urgent need of the services of such men as he was in many parts of Wales, advised him to take the charge of a church at once. At that time, Mr. Edmund Jones, of Pontypool, called at Maesgwyn, on his return from a preaching tour through North Wales, and represented to his young friend the destitute condition of the church at Llanbryn-mair, proposing to accompany him there to introduce him to the people. He consented to go, and was gladly received. Having laboured there, and throughout the surrounding country, with great acceptance, from the year 1734 to 1738, as a probationer, he was ordained April 13, in the last-mentioned year.

About the year 1740 he married Esther, daughter of Mr. Abraham Penry, of the parish of Penderyn, Breconshire. His intended father-in-law, when he was asking his consent, inquired what property he had? Taking hold of a Bible which lay on the table by him, he replied, "Sir, my chief inheritance is this Book." Mr. Penry was well satisfied both with him and his inheritance, and readily consented to his marrying his daughter.

When Mr. Rees settled in North Wales, the few Nonconforming congregations in that part of the Principality were in a very declined state; the Sabbath days were shockingly profaned, and every manner of vice sadly prevailed among the population; but through the Divine blessing, which attended his incessant labours, and those of the lively preachers whom he invited from South Wales to visit the neglected Northern

counties, such as Howell Harries, Jenkin Morgan, and others, a revival of religion was commenced, which, in course of time, effected a happy change in the moral aspect of the country.

Lewis Rees had some of the most remarkable instances of the presence of God with him in his self-denying labours. Soon after his settlement at Llanbryn-mair, he was invited to visit a small Nonconforming congregation at Bala, which had existed since the days of Mr. Hugh Owen, of Bronycludwr. Once, when he was preaching there, one Meyrick Davies, from the upper part of the mountainous parish of Llanuwchllyn, happened to be one of his hearers, and was much pleased with the preacher and the sermon. He desired Mr. Rees to come to his house to preach. He promised to go, and the time was fixed. On the appointed day he went, and found many of the neighbours assembled there, but all, both men and women, according to the custom of the country at that time, busily employed in knitting stockings. He took a Bible, and read a chapter, expecting the people would lay aside their work and attend to the word of God; but they went on still with their work. He then endeavoured to explain some part of the chapter; but nothing prevailed with the hearers to lay aside their stockings. At last he thought he would attempt to pray, though he could have but little hopes that the congregation would join him. The last thing he observed, before engaging in prayer, was, the fingers of all the people busily employed with their knitting-needles; but though he had no encouragement from them to begin his prayer, he was abundantly assisted by the Spirit of God. He soon began to hear the groans and sighs of all around him, and perceived that there was much weeping among them. When he had finished his prayer, he learnt, with pleasure, that his hearers had been brought under such concern for the salvation of their souls, that (like the woman of Samaria, who left her water-pot) they had quite forgotten their employment, and let their stockings, knitting-needles, and all, fall to the ground. He now found his hearers in a suitable frame to attend to what he had to say, and experienced great comfort and enlargement in preaching to them. That sermon was made the power of God unto the

salvation of many. At the earnest request of the people, he paid them another visit, and preached on the Sabbath there, both morning and afternoon, when the word was attended with great power. He soon gathered a congregation, and formed a church, in that parish, which continues in a flourishing condition to this day.

In his pious endeavours to do good he met with violent opposition, and the most unkind treatment, in many parts of North Wales. He was often in danger of his life in passing through the villages of Dinas and Llanymawddwy ; on his way from Llanbrynmair to Llanuwchllyn and Bala, the rude and ignorant people being encouraged by the clergyman to abuse him ; Mr. Rees one day met the reverend gentleman, and complained to him how uncivil his parishioners behaved towards an inoffensive stranger. "How," said his reverence, "can you, being a Presbyterian, expect to be tolerated in this country ? Go to Scotland ; that is the Presbyterians' country." "I hope, sir," replied Mr. Rees, "that you act from a higher principle in religion than a regard to the custom of the country in which you happen to live ; else, if you were to change your country you would change your religion : if you were to go to Scotland you would turn Presbyterian ; if to Italy, a Roman Catholic ; if to Turkey, you would renounce your Bible altogether, and receive the Koran as the rule of your faith and practice." The clergyman, who it seems had some candour, saw so much reason in this, that he promised to use all his influence to prevent his being molested any more ; and none of his parishioners gave him any further trouble.

During his first visits to the church at Pwllheli, in Caernarvonshire, warrants were repeatedly issued to apprehend him. On one occasion, having been apprehended and brought before that notorious persecutor, Chancellor Owen, he had only a narrow escape for his life. The Chancellor, finding that he was a regularly licensed Dissenting minister, and that there was no law to punish him, behaved towards him like a raving madman. He laid hold of a sword, and threatened to kill him with his own hands ; and with his sword cut his over-coat, so that it could not be worn afterwards.

In the year 1743 he went to Anglesea, to preach at the house of Mr. William Prichard. A crowd of persecutors assembled there to attack him. However, he ventured to stand before them, and as he was giving out the first verse of the hundred and twenty-first Psalm, in Welsh verse, to be sung, the words "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help," were so understood by the ignorant crowd that they believed the preacher had *an armed force* coming after him from the hills of Caernarvonshire for his defence. They were therefore alarmed, and remained quiet during the service. Some were converted, and others were brought to entertain a more favourable opinion of the Nonconformists than they had before. In the afternoon service, those who had not been affected by the sermon in the morning, finding that they had nothing to fear from the imaginary army, grew violent, prevented the preaching, and it was with great difficulty that the preacher made his escape unhurt.

Mr. Rees, after labouring successfully in North Wales for twenty-five years, in 1759 accepted an invitation from the Independent church at Mynyddbach, near Swansea, and returned to his native county to end his days. He was blessed with a long life and almost an uninterrupted health. Having been faithful unto death he was gathered unto his people in great peace, March 21, 1800, aged ninety years and nineteen days, and in the sixty-fifth year of his ministry.

Lewis Rees was distinguished, as a man, a Christian, and a minister of the gospel, by those traits of character which made him agreeable, respectable, and eminently useful. His gift in prayer was extraordinary, and he excelled most of his brethren in a happy way of administering reproofs effectively and without irritating the parties reproofed. He also had a remarkable talent to win the affections of children and young people. He generally preached in a practical rather than a doctrinal strain, yet his orthodoxy was beyond question. He took an active part, as we have seen, in the movement in favour of orthodoxy in 1770; and in 1790, when he was eighty years of age, he translated and published Dr. Bogue's sermon on the importance of right sentiments in religion, in opposition to the Socinian

tenet, the harmlessness of mental error, which was then obtruded on the public. This, we believe, was the only thing he ever wrote for the press.

Mr. Rees had six children, but none of them are known to the public except his second son, the celebrated Dr. Abraham Rees, of London.¹

¹ *Evangelical Magazine* for 1813, pp. 1-9.





CHAPTER VI.

FROM A.D. 1801 TO 1861.

Cessation of Persecution—Rise of Wesleyan Methodism in Wales—The London Missionary Society—The British and Foreign Bible Society—Separation of the Calvinistic Methodists from the Established Church—The Revivals of this Period—Religious Knowledge of the Welsh Peasantry—Controversies—Religious Literature of the Welsh Nonconformists—Biographical Sketches of D. Davies, of Swansea, Ebenezer Morris, David Davies, of Castellhowell, Ebenezer Richard, John Jenkins, D.D., Hugh Hughes—The Statistics of the Nonconforming Bodies in Wales in 1861: the Independents, the Calvinistic Methodists, the Antipædobaptists, the Wesleyans, the Minor Sects—Education—The Church and Dissent.



IN the former chapters of our history we had the painful duty of recording the manifold, prolonged, and severe sufferings of our pious forefathers; but in this chapter we have scarcely any sufferings worth naming to record. The persecutors, it seems, at length found out that by persecuting people for their religion they were only giving additional strength to a cause which they were aiming to destroy.

Though the Messrs. John and Charles Wesley repeatedly visited Wales during the early years of their public career, yet it does not appear that they had been the means of gathering permanent congregations or of forming religious societies in any part of the country. In the year 1761 Mr. Wesley appointed Mr. Thomas Taylor to itinerate in the Principality. He began his work at Chepstow, and preached at different towns on his way from that place to Gower, in Glamorganshire, where he settled for some time, and formed seven small societies.

In the summer of the following year he visited the English district of Pembrokeshire. Multitudes of people crowded to hear him, and there again he gathered eight or nine societies. After labouring successfully in Wales for two years Mr. Taylor was removed to Ireland, and was succeeded in the Principality by other preachers. The preachers on the Chester circuit had also gathered a few societies in the counties of Flint and Denbigh before the close of the eighteenth century; but those, as well as the societies gathered by Mr. Taylor and others in South Wales, were English.

It appears that no attempt had been made by any Wesleyan Methodist to preach in the Welsh language till the year 1800. Welsh Wesleyan Methodism originated under the following circumstances:—A young man named Edward Jones, who had resided for some years at Manchester, on the death of his brother in 1799 was desired by his afflicted parents to return home and settle with them at Bethafarn, near Ruthin, Denbighshire. Having joined a Wesleyan society at Manchester in 1796, he felt grieved that circumstances should have called him to a district in Wales where there was no society of that denomination. Before leaving Manchester he expressed his feelings to one of the ministers, who advised him to call upon the preachers on the Chester circuit on his way home, and invite them to Ruthin. He did so, and got a promise from one of them to come. On the 3rd of January, 1800, he went to Ruthin, and secured a convenient room to hold the meeting. The preacher came at the appointed time, and had a large and attentive congregation to hear him. Mr. Jones afterwards succeeded in securing the services of preachers from Chester every other Sabbath, and on those Sabbaths when there would be no preacher he conducted prayer meetings himself; but having never been accustomed to pray or speak on any religious subject in the Welsh language, he, as well as the preachers who came from Chester, was of very little benefit to the people at Ruthin, as most of them could not understand the English language. Finding that the people were desirous of having the services conducted in the Welsh language, he made an attempt to pray and address them in that language, and suc-

ceeded far beyond his expectations. In May, 1800, Mr. John Bryan, a native of Llanfyllin, who then resided at Chester and was a local preacher, came to Ruthin, and preached there in Welsh and English. Young Jones of Bethafarn found in him an able and an active coadjutor.

At the Conference held in London in 1800, Dr. Coke, who was himself a Welshman, proposed the establishment of a Welsh mission under the auspices of the English Conference. The proposal was at once adopted, and two Welshmen, Mr. Owen Davies and Mr. John Hughes, who had been travelling on English circuits, the former for eleven years and the latter for four years, were sent as missionaries to North Wales. Ruthin, where Mr. Edward Jones and Mr. J. Bryan had already gathered a small congregation, was fixed upon as the head station.

Mr. Owen Davies, who was a native of Wrexham, was a man of good natural talents, a devoted minister of Jesus Christ, and remarkably qualified by his piety, amiableness, firmness, and prudence, to be the superintendent of the Welsh mission. After labouring in Wales for twenty years he was recalled by the Conference to England, and died at Liverpool, January 12, 1830, aged 78.

Mr. John Hughes was born at Brecon. He was an accomplished scholar. His "*Horæ Britannicæ*," and other works, are evident proofs of his genius as well as his learning. As a preacher he was sound, plain, and useful, but not eloquent. He also was recalled to England in 1820, and died at *Kingsford*, on the 15th of May, 1843, in the 68th year of his age.

Both Mr. Davies and Mr. Hughes had to labour under a great disadvantage for some time as Welsh preachers.

Having always been accustomed to conduct the religious services in English, they could not speak in the Welsh language with fluency and propriety. However, in a short time they overcame that difficulty; and the peculiarity of their manner, together with the novelty of their doctrine, made a considerable stir throughout the country, which attracted multitudes to attend their ministry. In the course of a few months after the commencement of their mission, they formed religious societies

at Denbigh, St. Asaph, Holywell, Mold, and several other places in the counties of Denbigh and Flint. Mr. John Bryan was sent out as a travelling preacher in 1801; and in the following year Mr. Edward Jones, of Bethafarn, Mr. John Maurice, and Mr. John Jones were added to the number of the regular preachers. The labourers being thus increased, the field was soon extended. Most of the Northern counties, and some parts of South Wales, had been visited by them before the close of the year 1804.

There is not, perhaps, in the history of religion in any country, at least there is not in the history of religion in Wales, any instance of such rapid success attending the labours of men without anything extraordinary in their talents or positions, as that which attended the labours of the founders of Wesleyan Methodism in the Principality. Having only begun their work in the year 1800, before the end of 1810 the travelling preachers were forty in number; the societies which they had formed, four hundred; the members between five and six thousand; and they had built no less than eighty chapels in nine years. This remarkable success may be in part accounted for by the fact that the preachers at the outset were favoured by a degree of opposition from Churchmen, and Dissenters of all sects, except the Arians and the Quakers. Opposition, when not carried to the extreme of violent persecution, is always much more advantageous to a cause than silent contempt. Had they been left unnoticed and unopposed by all parties, it is not probable that their success would have been anything like what it was. The dark colours in which many of the popular ministers of the leading denominations represented their doctrines, excited the curiosity of several of their hearers to go and hear them, that they might judge for themselves; who, after finding that neither the preachers nor their doctrines were so bad as they had heard them described, were induced to become regular attendants on their ministry.

The Independents, the Antipædobaptists, the Calvinistic Methodists, and all the evangelical clergy at this time, were rigid Calvinists; and seeing that those Nonconforming congregations, who had professed themselves *Arminians* about fifty

or sixty years before, were now become avowed Arians or Unitarians, another attempt to propagate Arminianism in Wales was looked upon by them with a kind of horror. Several small volumes and pamphlets were published, with the view of arresting the progress of the dangerous error, as it was considered, by Mr. Thomas Jones, of Denbigh, and others. Mr. Owen Davies published replies to some of them, especially the productions of Mr. Jones's prolific pen.

It does not appear that the good Calvinists of that time perceived the essential difference between the evangelical Arminianism of the Wesleyans and the cold Pelagianism of the old Nonconformists of the eighteenth century; or, if they did perceive it, they had not the candour to acknowledge it; hence they kept aloof from them for years, and would not acknowledge them as Christian brethren. The Wesleyan preachers, on the other hand, being most of them young and inexperienced, obtruded the peculiarities of their creed on the public in their most objectionable form, and often unnecessarily and imprudently. Disputes seldom occur without some fault on both sides.

Opposition having gradually ceased, and the charm of novelty, which for some years attracted attention to the doctrines preached, having passed away, the increase of the Wesleyan body in Wales has been comparatively very small ever since the year 1810. The appointment of several of the most talented and influential ministers to English circuits, in the years 1817 and 1820, was also such a heavy blow to the Welsh interests, that many of them have never recovered from its effects.

The Welsh Wesleyan body, from an early period in their history, have manifested great zeal, perseverance, and activity in their efforts to cultivate religious literature in the Welsh language. Two or three attempts had been made in the eighteenth century to establish Welsh periodicals, but they all proved unsuccessful. Even the valuable magazine started by Mr. Charles, of Bala, in 1799, was discontinued in 1802. In the year 1809 the Wesleyan body had the courage to start a Welsh monthly magazine, entitled "*Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*," and

their enterprise succeeded. That periodical is continued to this day. About the same time they also began to publish a translation of "Dr. Coke's Commentary of the Bible." Their enterprising spirit and success at last moved all the other denominations. One after another started its denominational magazine, so that in the present day there are twelve or fifteen religious periodicals published monthly in the Welsh language.

While we thus deem it our duty to give the Welsh Wesleyans all the credit which is their due for their commendable activity and usefulness, we cannot help expressing our disapprobation of the blameable apathy and backwardness which they have always manifested when called upon to co-operate with their Nonconforming brethren in their efforts to secure those rights which the legislature has from time to time granted them. Our Wesleyan friends are as ready as any to grasp the privileges which those who are branded as "political Dissenters" have laboured for, but they carefully keep aloof from the efforts necessary to secure them.¹ In this they have never acted the part of faithful brethren.²

The Nonconformists of Wales, soon after the formation of the London Missionary Society, began to express their warmest sympathy with the movement then set on foot for the evangelization of the heathen world. Their contributions have been always most liberal, considering their circumstances; and they have also, from time to time, furnished the directors of the Society with a number of young men who have been sent out as missionaries. Messrs. Charles, of Bala; Roberts, of Llanbryn-mair; Jones, of Trelech; Davies, of Swansea; Jones, of Llangan; Peter, of Caermarthen, and other leading ministers had by their pens and eloquent tongues inspired the Welsh churches with a considerable measure of missionary zeal before the close of the eighteenth century. A memorable missionary meeting was held at Swansea in August, 1814, when Mr.

¹ Since the above remark was written, in 1861, a change for the better has taken place. There are now several ministers and laymen in this body as active as any in the other sects in promoting religious and civil liberty.

² "Hanes Crefydd," yr Nghymru gan D. Peter, pp. 641, 675. "Yr Eur-grawn Wesleyaidd" for 1828, 1829, 1830. Bywyd y Parch. Hugh Hughes.

Matthew Wilks and Mr. Tracey attended as a deputation from the Parent Society. This was the first meeting of the kind ever held in Wales. The Calvinistic Methodists, as well as the Independents, supported the London Missionary Society until they formed a missionary society of their own in 1840.

The increase and remarkable success of Sunday-schools, chiefly under the auspices of Mr. Charles, of Bala, created a large demand for Welsh Bibles; and Mr. Charles's urgent appeals on behalf of Wales ultimately led to the formation of that noble institution—the British and Foreign Bible Society. Within four years from the formation of the Society, 60,000 copies of the Welsh Bible, and 45,000 copies of the New Testament, separately, were published.¹

One of the most important occurrences of this period was the separation of the Calvinistic Methodists from the Established Church, which took place in the year 1811. The large measure of the Nonconforming element introduced into the connexion at its first formation by the multitudes from the Independent and Presbyterian congregations who then joined it, together with the continual nourishment which that element derived from the erection of chapels, the ever-increasing popularity and influence of the lay preachers, and the persecuting proceedings of the Bishops, gave full work to the clerical leaders of the body to keep some appearance of union between it and the Established Church. The question of ordaining the preachers had been more or less agitated from time to time, from the formation of the connexion, until it was actually carried out. The members of the societies generally and most of the preachers were in favour of it; while the clergy, and all whom they could influence, always set their faces against it. It does not appear, however, that Rowlands, Williams of Pantycelyn, and Peter Williams, the most eminent of the clerical Methodists of the eighteenth century, opposed the ordination of the lay brethren, on the ground that no ordination but that conferred by a prelatial Bishop was valid. The facts that both W. and P. Williams administered the Lord's Supper, without the qualification required by the canons of the Church of

¹ Morgan's "Life of Charles," p. 365.

England, having never been ordained priests; and that Rowlands approved of the ordination of David Williams, of Llysfrydydd; William Edwards, of Groeswen; Thomas Walters, of Mynyddislwyn, and Morgan John Lewis, of New Inn, by the members of their respective churches, prove that these excellent clergymen attached but very little importance to episcopal ordinations. It seems that their objection arose from their groundless expectation that some alteration favourable to Methodism would have been made in the regulations of the Established Church, and their apprehension that an entire separation from the Church would lessen their influence, and circumscribe the spheres of their usefulness.

After the ordination of the fore-mentioned preachers by their churches, the expulsion of Rowlands from the Church, which gave him more opportunities to serve the connexion throughout the country, and the addition of Mr. D. Jones, of Llangan, Mr. W. Davies, of Neath, and others, to the number of the clerical Methodists, the question of ordaining more preachers was set aside for some years; but owing to the vast increase of the connexion, in consequence of powerful revivals about the close of the last and the beginning of the present century, the point became again the subject of more earnest discussion than ever. Things at last had come to such a crisis, that the decision of the question could not be postponed any longer, whatever the consequences might be.

The congregations had increased to between three and four hundred, while there were not above thirteen clergymen in the thirteen counties to administer the ordinances to them. Only three of those clergymen resided in North Wales, and the majority of the ten in South Wales confined their labours almost exclusively to their own parishes, so that they were of but very little service to the body at large. The consequence was that many of the societies would be kept a whole year without having the Lord's Supper administered to them. Under such circumstances, they would occasionally go to the nearest parish churches to receive the ordinance; but their feelings were often shocked at the idea that the administrators were men of such character as would not be tolerated as members

of the connexion ; and not unfrequently they would meet there, at the Lord's Table, parties whom they had been obliged to expel from their fellowship only a few days before for open immorality. Such great inconveniences and glaring inconsistencies at length became intolerable, and the societies throughout the connexion, with few exceptions, declared that they would not bear the yoke any longer.

The clergy who opposed the desired change had nothing in the shape of argument to urge against it, save only that the connexion had until then prospered without it. They stigmatized those who dared to introduce the question at the Associations as schismatics, and attempted to put down all agitation by denunciations and passionate threatenings. Those clergymen who had been deprived of their livings on account of their Methodism, among whom was Mr. Charles, of Bala, when they saw that there was an almost universal feeling in favour of the change, wisely gave way : but Mr. Jones, of Llangan, and others who still held livings, opposed it violently to the last. Mr. Jones was, perhaps, the most influential person in the connexion, Mr. Charles himself not excepted ; and had he been permitted to live to head the opposition, the consequences might have been serious ; but his Divine Master removed him to a better world just before the time the matter was to be decided. There was something very remarkable in the circumstances of his death. He presided at the Association at Llangeitho, in the beginning of August, 1810. The subject of ordaining some of the preachers being introduced, the venerable chairman, losing all self-control, ordered the person who proposed it to be turned out. A considerable uproar ensued. Mr. James, of Abergavenny, Mr. John Elias, and others, interposed ; but the clergy would not argue the matter. They attempted to carry their point by force. When all had been thrown into confusion, Mr. David Rees, of Llanfynydd, proposed that a day should be set apart for special prayer on the subject by every congregation throughout the connexion. The chairman then exclaimed, " For goodness sake, my dear brethren, do not pray me now out of the world ; I shall be out of the way very soon." He returned home from

that Association, and in a few days after died. The principal hindrance being thus removed, it was soon agreed, by an overwhelming majority of the Societies, to ordain a certain number of the preachers. At the Association at Bala, in June, 1811, Mr. Charles, assisted by Mr. John Evans, of Bala, and Mr. Robert Jones, of Rhosylan, two of the oldest preachers in the connexion, ordained the following persons:—Mr. John Elias, and Mr. Richard Lloyd, of Anglesea; Mr. Evan Richardson, of Caernarvon; Mr. Thomas Jones, of Denbigh; Mr. John Davies, of Nantglyn; Mr. John Roberts, of Llangwm; Mr. William Jones, of Dolyfodddu; and Mr. Evan Griffiths, of Meifod. At the Association held at Llandilo, Caermarthen-shire, in August the same year, Mr. John Williams, of Pantycelyn, and Mr. W. Williams, of Lledrod, and one or two other clergymen, ordained thirteen of the preachers, viz.:—Mr. John Evans, of Llwynyffortun; Mr. David Rees, of Llanfynydd; Mr. Arthur Evans, of Cynwil; Mr. David Charles, of Caermarthen; Mr. James James, of Abergavenny; Mr. David Parry, and Mr. Evan Evans, of Breconshire; Mr. Ebenezer Morris, Mr. John Thomas, and Mr. Ebenezer Richard, of Cardiganshire; Mr. Evan Harries, of Pembrokeshire; Mr. Hopkin Bevan, of Glamorganshire; and Mr. John Rees, of Newport, Monmouthshire.

After the death of Mr. Jones, of Llangan, there were only twelve clergymen in the connexion—six of whom left it when they saw that they could not prevent the ordination of the preachers. Though these clergymen had considerable influence in their own immediate neighbourhoods, happily for the peace and safety of the Methodist body it was not extensive throughout the country. They succeeded in dividing some societies, in persuading several families of the “respectable class” to go over to the Church, and also in taking possession of a few chapels, which have never been restored to the connexion. Even a small number of the preachers themselves opposed the change; and it was not without some trouble that one or two of the societies were persuaded to receive the Lord’s Supper from the hands of the newly-ordained preachers. The society at Llangeitho was one of those superstitious fra-

ternities. One Sabbath morning Mr. Charles, of Bala, and Mr. David Rees, of Llanfynydd, accidentally met there. Mr. Charles was desired to administer the ordinance ; but when he found that some of the members, if not the majority of the society, were not willing to allow Mr. Rees to assist him in the administration, he refused to do it, and charged the refractory society at the next Association with insubordination to the rules of the connexion. Mr. Ebenezer Richard was appointed to go there the following Sabbath, and give the communion to as many as would receive it. Only a few individuals refused, and they left and went to the parish church. Mr. Richard and the congregation that morning were favoured with unmistakable proofs of the presence of God ; and that extraordinary gracious visitation was construed by all as a sign that a preacher, not episcopally ordained, might, without presumption or sin, administer the Lord's Supper.

The opposition of some of the clergy to this change in the constitution of the Methodist body arose not only from what they saw would be its immediate result—the total and final separation of the connexion from the Established Church—but also from the strange and supercilious tenacity with which they clung to the chimera of apostolical succession. Those who will take the trouble of reading a pamphlet on this subject, entitled “The Welsh Looking-glass,” written by Mr. Thomas Jones, of Creaton, an evangelical clergyman brought up among the Welsh Methodists, can see how far wild and superstitious notions may carry even good men. He there solemnly charges the Methodists with the sins of schism, and of rushing irregularly to the sacred function. The good man complains bitterly that many persons without any qualification whatever have been ordained even by bishops, which he considers a very great evil ; but it seems that he looked upon the entrance into the ministry of such holy and eminently qualified men as John Elias, Ebenezer Morris, Ebenezer Richard, &c., without passing under episcopal hands, as an equal if not a greater evil !

The step taken by the Calvinistic Methodists in the memor-

able year 1811, which proved a mortal sin against a host of over-zealous Episcopalians, was evidently well-pleasing to the King of Zion ; for the last fifty years have been incomparably the most prosperous period in the history of the connexion.

The Welsh churches during this period have been repeatedly blessed with remarkable and very powerful revivals. The years 1807-8-9 were seasons of great spiritual prosperity. The additions to the churches amounted to several thousands, chiefly in South Wales. From 1815 to 1820 most of the congregations throughout North Wales were similarly blessed.

The memorable revival which commenced in Caermarthen-shire in the summer of 1828, and soon spread over the whole Principality, continued unabated to the close of the year 1830. We find in the "History of the Antipædobaptist Associations," that 6,642 were added to the churches of that denomination during those years. That being by far the smallest of the three leading denominations, we may safely estimate the additions to the Independent and Calvinistic Methodist churches at 20,000 ; and if the increase of the Wesleyan Societies was proportionate, the churches of the four denominations had above 30,000 members added to them during the years 1828-30. Hundreds of those converted in this revival continue to this day to adorn their profession, and a large number of new interests then formed in different localities are lasting memorials of that gracious visitation.

In 1839 the churches in North Wales, and the Welsh churches in Liverpool, were favoured with a large measure of revival, which in the ensuing three years reached almost every part of South Wales. This differed from all the former revivals in Wales in its not being accompanied by the usual excitement and noisy manifestation of feeling. That difference led some elderly professors, of a naturally exciteable temperament, to question its genuineness. The means also by which it was chiefly promoted—the reading and study of "Finney's Lectures on Revivals," which gave a less evangelical tone to the ministry, and led the preachers to dwell more on the sins and duties of professors than on such melting themes as the love of God, the death of Christ, and the privileges of believers,

caused some good people to suspect that there was more of man than of God in the movement. But the good and lasting effects which have followed it prove beyond question that the hand of the Lord was in the work. The converts amounted to many thousands, but we are not able to state the exact number.

The year 1849 was a year of singular judgments and mercies to the inhabitants of South Wales. That terrible pestilence, the cholera, swept hundreds away in a few weeks, and by the Divine blessing which attended the awful visitation, thousands were brought to think of their ways and turn to the Lord. All the places of worship in the manufacturing districts of the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan for some months during the summer and autumn were overcrowded. Multitudes who had not been seen at any place of worship during the previous ten or fifteen years, became regular attendants for a time; and though many of them, when the pestilence ceased, returned to their former evil habits, still a large number of that class have been thoroughly changed, and continue to this day to attend the house of God. Most of those who were regular hearers before then joined the churches. No less than 9,139 were added to 67 Independent churches in the counties of Monmouth, Glamorgan, Brecknock, and Caermarthen, in the course of three or four months. Many feared that an unusual number of relapses would follow this sudden increase, but their fears were not realized to nearly the extent it was apprehended.

Wales, among the various other countries of Protestant Christendom, has had its full share of the blessed revival of 1859-60. This awakening commenced about the close of the year 1858, in the neighbourhood of Aberystwyth, Cardiganshire, by the instrumentality of Mr. Humphrey Jones, a Wesleyan preacher, and Mr. David Morgan, a Calvinistic Methodist minister—two good men, but unknown to fame. The movement which these humble servants of Christ had the honour of being instrumental in originating was in a short time felt through the length and breadth of the Principality, and among all evangelical denominations. It is estimated that in the

course of this revival, from December, 1858, to March, 1860, no less than from 35,000 to 40,000 were added to the Independent churches, and an equal number to the Calvinistic Methodist churches; about 10,000 to the Antipædobaptists, and from 4,000 to 15,000 to the Wesleyans. The numerous converts, with comparatively rare exceptions, hold on remarkably well hitherto.

The absurd and exaggerated accounts of the excitements and disorders connected with revivals in Wales often given to the English public, have most probably left the impression on the minds of many that the Welsh people are a set of weak-minded enthusiasts, and that their knowledge of religious things is at the best but superficial and very imperfect. But the case is quite the reverse. There is probably no class of country people anywhere in Christendom better acquainted with, and who take more delight to discuss, the abstrusest points of theology and the sciences most intimately connected with it, than the Welsh peasantry. Dr. Bennett, referring to the people of Wales, very properly says, "It is a fact at once curious, instructive, and gratifying, that many, amidst the extreme poverty and abundant labours of that simple region, give themselves to the study of all the nicer distinctions of theology with an ardour and a mental force seldom found in the centre of wealth, and its attendant science."¹ It is not unusual in Wales to see groups of agricultural labourers on rainy days at the country blacksmith's or the shoemaker's shop, or of colliers and miners underground, met to discuss different points in theology, mental science, geology, ecclesiastical history, &c., and that with such acumen and intelligence as would delight professors of those sciences to listen to: religious controversies to such a people are always interesting.

The controversies of this period are too numerous to be all mentioned, much less to give a minute account of. The most important was that between the moderate and the hyper-Calvinists, which began about the year 1815, and was carried on for above twenty years. In that year the amiable John Roberts, of Llanbrynmair, published a pamphlet on "The

¹ "History of the Dissenters" from 1808 to 1838, p. 202.

Ends of Christ's Death" (*Dybenion Marwolaeth Crist*), in which he ably maintains the views advanced by Williams, Fuller, Wardlow, and others, on the extent of the atonement. This well-written pamphlet created a considerable sensation throughout the country. Mr. Thomas Jones, of Denbigh, wrote a reply to it, which drew from Mr. Roberts a second and a larger work on the subject, entitled *Galwad ddifrifol ar Ymofynwyr am y Gwirionedd*, i.e., "A Serious Call to Inquirers for the Truth." This was published in 1820. It is written in a plain but forcible style, and in a spirit worthy of the exalted subject, and of the author's known suavity of temper and eminent piety. Six able letters, on the different points involved in this controversy, by Messrs. Williams, of Wern; Morgan, of Machynlleth; Everett, of Denbigh; Jones, of Llanuwchllyn; Griffiths, of St. David's; and Breese, of Liverpool, are appended to Mr. Roberts's work. Many other writers soon came to the field, the most talented of whom were Mr. Richard Jones, of Wern, a Calvinistic Methodist minister, and Mr. Samuel Bowen, of Macclesfield, then tutor of the Independent Academy at Newtown, whose work on the atonement, published in 1829, is the ablest production on the subject in the Welsh language. About the same time two eminent Antipædobaptist ministers in South Wales, Mr. John Jenkins, of Hengoed, and Mr. John Philip Davies, of Tredegar, were measuring lances, the former earnestly defending the hyper-Calvinism of Dr. Gill, and the latter the moderate Calvinism of Mr. Fuller.

John Roberts was not the man to enter the arena of controversy merely for the sake of amusement. His seraphic piety, and ardent desire to be always usefully employed in promoting the glory of his divine Master and the salvation of souls, made controversies to him a burden rather than a diversion. Nothing but a strong sense of duty prompted him to engage in this controversy. The propagation of Wesleyanism in the Principality had, to a great extent, changed the style of preaching in the three leading denominations—the Independent, the Calvinistic Methodist, and the Antipædobaptist. In order to keep at a safe distance from Arminianism,

such a high Calvinistic strain of preaching was adopted, as tended to lead the people direct to the whirlpool of Antinomianism. Mr. Roberts, foreseeing what would be the result of such preaching, protested against it ; hence this long and noisy controversy. The good man was stigmatized as a dangerous heretic, and even some leading ministers of his own denomination closed their pulpits against him ; but he lived down all opposition, and the views for the advocacy of which he was much slandered forty years ago are now so generally received, that hardly a minister of any note in the Principality would publicly oppose them.

A controversy on Presbyterianism and Independency, between Dr. L. Edwards, of Bala, and Mr. S. Roberts, of Llanbrynmair, attracted considerable attention about ten years ago. Hardly a year passes without a *baptismal controversy* in one part or another of the Principality, and the *spirit* in which these controversies are conducted is very seldom to be commended.

A bare catalogue of all the religious works published in the Welsh language by the Nonconformists of this period would make up a large volume. They have furnished their countrymen with *eight* Commentaries on the whole Bible, *eight* on the New Testament, separately, *seven* Biblical and Theological Dictionaries, four or five Bodies of Divinity, and works without number on practical, experimental, and devotional subjects. Every denomination has two or three monthly periodicals. Three quarterly reviews, and four weekly newspapers, in the Welsh language, are also conducted by Nonconformists.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

The eminent characters of this period are so numerous, that we can hardly afford space for short notices of one out of every ten of those whose virtues and usefulness deserve to be kept in everlasting remembrance. We designedly omit those well-known worthies whose lives are already accessible to English readers, such as Jones, of Llangan ; Charles, of Bala ; Peter, of Caermarthen ; Evans, of Trewen ; Christmas Evans ; Williams, of Wern ; John Elias, and Jones, of Trelech,

in order to reserve a portion of our limited space for less known but equally deserving characters.

DAVID DAVIES,

One of the most powerful pulpit orators in his own or any other age, was born in the village of Llangeler, Caermarthen-shire, in the year 1763. His parents, not being in affluent circumstances, could not give him better advantages of education than a few years in his childhood at the humble school of his native village. He there learnt to read and write. All his subsequent acquirements were the result of his own industry and self-application. No account of the incidents of the first twenty years of his life has been preserved. At the early age of twenty he married an amiable young woman in his own neighbourhood, named Jane Evans. About that time he became the subject of some kind of religious impressions, and regularly attended the ministry of the celebrated Arminian or Arian preacher, Mr. D. Davies, of Castellhowell, at a chapel in the neighbourhood called Penrhiw. He was admitted to the communion of the church at that place in the twenty-third year of his age, but he only partook of the Lord's Supper once among them. By some means or other his mind became uneasy, and overpowering convictions of sin brought him to the very brink of despair. His religious associates at Penrhiw could not administer any solid comfort to his wounded spirit. According to their creed, they would not direct him to the blood of the cross to quiet his troubled conscience, but rather to a dependence upon his own righteousness. His mental agony had become so excruciating, that a few days more of such suffering would have been too much for his nature to bear. In this extreme distress he was providentially led to hear Mr. William Perkins, of Pencadair, whose doctrine proved a word in season to his weary soul. He then joined the Independent church at Pencadair, and soon attracted the notice of the brethren by his extraordinary gift in prayer, which induced them to urge him to commence preaching. He delivered his first sermon at the cottage of a tailor in the parish

of Llangeler.² His fame as a most eloquent preacher was soon spread far and near, and wherever he would be announced to preach multitudes of people assembled to hear him.

There was a small Independent church, consisting of twelve members, at Drefach, near Llangeler, under the pastoral care of Mr. John Lewis, an elderly person, zealously orthodox, but equally cold and lifeless as a preacher, in a very declined state when Mr. Davies began to move the neighbourhood by his warm and powerful preaching. This small society invited him to become the colleague of their aged pastor. He complied with their invitation, and was ordained there in the year 1790. Their place of worship soon became too small, and a much larger edifice, in a more central part of the neighbourhood, was erected in 1792. Mr. Davies did not confine his labours to this place, but preached for one Sabbath in the month at Neuaddlwyd, in Cardiganshire, and another at Gwernogle, in Caermarthenshire. The churches and the congregations at those places were more than doubled in a short time.

In 1795 he received a pressing invitation from the churches at Mynyddbach, and Sketty, near Swansea, to become co-pastor with the venerable Lewis Rees, which, after mature consideration, he accepted. He found there an extensive field of labour, having three congregations to supply—Mynyddbach, Morriston, and Sketty—and could hardly expect much assistance from his venerable colleague, who was then in the eighty-sixth year of his age. Yet, extensive as his sphere was, his ardent desire to do good soon made it more so still. The destitute condition of the teeming population of Swansea moved his zealous spirit. The ancient Independent church in that town had been converted into an Arian or a Unitarian congregation some years before Mr. Davies came to the neighbourhood. He had, therefore, to establish the Congregational interest there anew. His labours in the town proved signally successful. The room in which he preached in a few months became too small; a large chapel was then erected, which he called

² It is worthy of notice that the celebrated Christmas Evans joined and left the Arminian church at Penrhiw the same time as David Davies, and that both preached their first sermons at the same cottage within a week of each other.

Ebenezer. He soon found himself there surrounded by one of the largest and most respectable congregations in the Principality. He efficiently served his four large congregations until the year 1808, when Mr. Daniel Evans, of Bangor, took the charge of those at Mynyddbach and Morriston.

Notwithstanding his excessive labours at home, he repeatedly visited all the Independent churches throughout South and North Wales, and those visits were always eminently attended by the Divine blessing. About the year 1800 he paid his first visit to London, where he found thousands of his fellow-countrymen destitute of the means of grace in their own language. By his untiring efforts and winning eloquence he succeeded, in a few weeks, in gathering large congregations at Southwark, Deptford, and Woolwich. Those congregations were afterwards supplied by a change of ministers from the Principality, until they had settled pastors.

It is impossible to form an exact estimate of the amount and variety of this excellent minister's labours, and of the signal service which he rendered to the cause of Christ, especially in connexion with his own denomination. During a pastorate of twenty-six years, he admitted to the communion of the churches under his care no less than 2,000 members; and the number of those converted by means of his powerful preaching throughout the Principality, and elsewhere, is known only to Him who knows all things. Excessive labour at length proved too much for his strong constitution; nature began to give way, and evident signs of his approaching dissolution appeared some time previous to the solemn event. The last time he appeared in public was at the Association at Gwynfe, Caermarthenshire, in the summer of 1816, where he preached with remarkable effect, and most affectingly parted with his brethren, until they should meet in "the General Assembly and Church of the First-born." In the month of October following, his already shattered frame received an additional shock in the death of his beloved wife, whom he only survived two months. He administered the Lord's Supper, and gave the right hand of fellowship to thirteen persons, on their admission to the church, on his last Sabbath on earth. His

parting address to his people was quite overpowering. On the following Thursday, December 26, 1816, aged fifty-three, he slept in Jesus. "His zeal for the glory of God appeared with undiminished fervour, and his diligence in performing the duties of his vocation continued with unabating vigour, till within a few days of his removal to the heavenly world. Instead of outliving his zeal and diligence in the best of causes, it may truly be said that he fell an honourable martyr to his indefatigable exertions in the service of the church. He entered the valley of the shadow of death as one who feared no evil. He has left six disconsolate children, and a numerous circle of friends throughout the Principality, to lament his loss."¹ His two sons, Mr. David Davies, of Stoke Bishop, near Bristol, and Mr. John Davies, of Homerton, are highly respectable and useful ministers.

Among a number of accomplished orators, who were the glory of the Welsh Nonconformist pulpit fifty and sixty years ago, David Davies, of Swansea, occupied a foremost position. In some respects he was superior to all his distinguished contemporaries. A gentleman who has a distinct recollection of his eloquence, states that its effects were sometimes striking in the highest degree. The melodious intonations of his voice were wonderfully impressive. As he grew warm with his subject, it was delightful to observe the number of beaming countenances which were directed towards him from all sides; plaintive cries, expressive of the deepest emotion, soon followed; and some of the people actually laughed through their tears. There are still hundreds of living witnesses who can bear testimony to the correctness of this statement. It must not, however, be supposed that he ever indulged in pulpit drolleries, or in what the poet Cowper has denounced as "quips and skittish fancies." The effect produced was always of the most solemn kind. The thrilling and impassioned tones in which he was accustomed to describe the triumphs of the Redeemer, and the blessedness of His saints, can never be forgotten by those who heard them. Indeed, the music of his

¹ *Evangelical Magazine* for 1817, p. 59.

voice was of itself sufficient to rivet the attention of the most careless ; and when that voice was exerted in proclaiming the glorious doctrines of the gospel in all their fulness and preciousness, we need not wonder that the effects of his ministry were so remarkable.

The venerable William Davies, of Fishguard, says—"I well remember Mr. Davies's (of Swansea) repeated preaching tours through Pembrokeshire, and can never forget the emotions and deep feeling which his matchless eloquence produced in his crowded congregations everywhere. He had a penetrating mind, a lively imagination, and a clear, distinctive utterance. He had a remarkable command of his voice ; when he led his hearers to Sinai, he thundered out the curses of the law in such terrific sounds, that almost every one would feel himself ready to faint with fear ; then taking his stand on Calvary, he would describe the sufferings of the Lamb of God for the guilty, and the infinite virtue of the blood of sprinkling, with such a flow of eloquence, and in the most melodious intonations, that his enraptured audience would almost leap for joy. Let the following fact serve as an instance of the remarkable effect of his preaching :—A captain of a vessel (who was a member of my church at Fishguard) always attended at Ebenezer Chapel when his vessel would be in Swansea. One day he asked another captain, 'Will you go with me next Sunday to Ebenezer to hear Mr. Davies? I am sure he will make you to weep!' 'Make me to weep!' replied he, with an oath ; 'there is not a preacher in the world who can make me to weep.' However, he promised to go. They took their seats in the front of the gallery. The irreligious captain for a while, with a brazen countenance, stared in the preacher's face, determined to defy everything he would say ; but when the master of the assembly began to grow warm, the stern sailor hung down his head, and long before the sermon was over he was weeping like a child."

An elderly minister, now gathered to his fathers, in his "Reminiscences of Old Ministers," inserted in the *Diwygiwr*, says—"The Rev. D. Davies, of Swansea, was very eminent as a popular preacher. In his best days he was one of the chief, if not the chief, of all the Welsh preachers, in this

respect.¹ There was something very striking in his aspect, while looking around upon the congregation; his voice was melodious, and every word was uttered so audibly, and with such distinctness from beginning to end, that all could hear and understand the whole sermon. His fluency was remarkable. At the Associations (the meetings on such occasions are always held in the open air, weather permitting) he was generally appointed to preach—the last of three, at the ten o'clock service, when the crowd was most numerous. As soon as he stood up to give out a verse of a hymn to be sung or while repeating his text, some of the people, who before had been carelessly or listlessly reposing on the ground in different parts of the field, might be seen to rise; and others descended from the neighbouring hillocks, all eager to press forward towards the platform (on which the ministers stood). After this, signs of deep feeling were soon perceptible, and spread generally throughout the assembled multitude. On one such occasion, I remember that I was standing near a respectable and pious young lady of my acquaintance, from the English part of Pembrokeshire, and I observed that the tears were flowing copiously down her cheeks. I was rather surprised at this, as I knew that she did not understand the Welsh language. When the service was over I asked her why she wept? 'Weep!' exclaimed she; 'how could I help weeping when I saw all around me in tears, and I myself could not understand one word of what was spoken?'

"Public men are gifted with different endowments, adapted to the time in which they live, and to the particular work to which they are appointed. Mr. Davies's style of preaching was especially adapted to alarm the unconverted, and to win them to the love of religion; and in these respects he was made extensively useful."²

¹ "Perhaps I may be deemed too partial to my own denomination in making such an observation. 'What,' it may be asked, 'shall be thought of John Elias, Christmas Evans, and others?' In point of flowing eloquence Davies was superior to every one of them; but with regard to his matter, and the energy and deep feeling with which he treated his subjects, Elias, in his best days, excelled him."

² *Diwygiwr* for 1855, p. 173.

Mr. Davies published a Quarto Edition of the Welsh Bible, with Explanatory Notes; but he died before the work was completed. The Notes on some of the Epistles and the Revelation were written by Mr. Davies, of Pantteg. He also composed eighty-one Welsh hymns, most of which are among the finest compositions in the language.

EBENEZER MORRIS.

This celebrated preacher was the eldest son of an equally celebrated father—David Morris. At the time of his birth in 1769 his father resided at Lledrod, Cardiganshire, but a short time after the family removed to Troedyrour, in the same county, and young Ebenezer was educated at a school kept in that parish by a clergyman named Davies. In the seventeenth year of his age he settled at Trecastle, Breconshire, where he kept a day school. Shortly after he settled there he became the subject of a deep religious impression, to which he had been a stranger before, though brought up in a decidedly religious family. He joined the Calvinistic Methodist Society at that place, and in about a year after he was urged by the brethren to commence preaching. He soon became very popular as a preacher. After the death of his father in 1791 he returned to his native county, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was in every respect a very remarkable man. His unblemished character, his prudence, his dexterity in the management of difficult cases of church discipline, and his untiring activity, elevated him to the foremost place in the denomination which was favoured with his eminent service. As a preacher he had but few equals, and no superior in the Welsh pulpit. "Those natural advantages and qualifications which serve to make a public speaker popular, Mr. Morris was endowed with in extraordinary variety and amplitude. His voice was remarkable for its power, capability of modulations and melody. His style of speaking never failed to rivet the attention of all the hearers by its diversity, eloquence, and energy." His popularity was such that hardly any place of worship in Wales was large enough to contain the multitudes

who flocked to hear him everywhere throughout South and North Wales.

After a life of remarkable activity and usefulness, this good man died in the full enjoyment of the consolation of the gospel, which he preached with extraordinary power and effect for about thirty-seven years. He died, after a few weeks' suffering from pulmonary consumption, August 15, 1825, and was followed to his grave by a vast concourse of devout and weeping friends. His name is to this day a household word in Wales.

DAVID DAVIES, OF CASTELLHOWELL.

This celebrated person was born at Goetre Isaf, near Lampeter, Cardiganshire, in the year 1745. His parents were eminently religious persons, and members of the Independent church at Cilgwyn, then under the pastoral care of the excellent Philip Pugh. Mr. Davies attributes his first religious impressions to his father's prayers in the family, and the affecting sermons of his venerable pastor. He says that he began 'to pray with deep earnestness in the eighth or ninth year of his age. He had a strong desire from his childhood to be a minister of the gospel. In the year 1758 he was placed under the instruction of his relative, Mr. Joshua Thomas, of Leominster, where he continued for a year and a half. The pious instructions and holy example of that excellent minister greatly deepened the impressions of the evil of sin and the beauty of holiness on the tender mind of his pupil. After his return from Leominster, he spent some time at a Grammar school at Llanybyther, and afterwards at the school of Mr. T. Lloyd, vicar of Llangeler. In the year 1765 he was admitted to the academy at Caermarthen, then under the presidency of Dr. Jenkin Jenkins. While there he lost, according to his own testimony, most of the religious impressions of which he had been subject from his eighth year. It is probable also that there he imbibed those loose and indefinite doctrinal notions which he retained to the close of his life. It is impossible to say what was his creed. By some he is reckoned among the Arminians, while others

assert that he was an Arian, if not a Unitarian. In a letter to a friend he says, "I am perfectly satisfied in my own mind that Dr. Priestly, and others of his party, may be good and pious Christians; I have also the same opinion of John Calvin, Dr. Crisp, and their disciples. I would cheerfully sit in the same communion with them, with the delightful hope of being in their company for ever in heaven." It appears that he laid not the least stress upon a man's sentiments. He associated more with the Arians and Unitarians than he did with the orthodox party, probably because that party would not associate with him on account of the indefiniteness of his creed.

Soon after leaving the academy, Mr. Davies settled as co-pastor with Mr. David Lloyd at Llwynrhydowen, Penrhiw, and other places, in Cardiganshire. He was ordained July 15, 1773. On the 15th of December, 1775, he married Miss Anne Evans, of Voelallt, Ciliau-Aeron, and some time after took up his residence at Castellhowell, where he spent the remainder of his days. Here he opened a classical school, and soon became the most celebrated and successful teacher of youth in the Principality. The gentry, as well as the farmers, sent their sons to his school. A vast number of young men, who rose to positions of importance and eminence in both the church and the world, were indebted to him for laying the foundation of their greatness. Most of the clergy, as well as the Dissenting ministers, of that part of the Principality were educated under him. Dr. Horsley, when he became Bishop of St. David's, felt mortified to find that a Nonconforming minister was the most celebrated tutor in the whole diocese, and to give vent to his spleen he gave out that he would not ordain any of Mr. Davies's pupils: that possibly affected his school to some extent, but the Nonconformist's character as a tutor was now too well established for the Bishop's bigotry to render it any material damage.

Bishop Horsley, with all his superior talents and learning, was the slave of bigotry and narrow-mindedness. Expecting a general election to take place soon, he addressed the following circular letter to the clergy of his diocese:—

"REV. SIR,—Sir William Mansell has declared himself a candidate to represent the borough of Caermarthen in the next parliament. I cannot refrain from declaring that he has my heartiest good wishes. Mr. Phillips, the present member, has received the thanks of the Dissenters for the part he took in the last attempt to overthrow our ecclesiastical constitution by the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. By this it is easy to guess what part he is likely to take in any future attempt for the same purpose. I hope that I shall not have the mortification to find a single clergyman in my diocese who will be so false to his own character, and his duty to the Established Church, as to give his vote for any man who has discovered such principles.—I am, rev. sir, your affectionate brother and faithful servant,

"SAMUEL ST. DAVID'S.

"ABERGWILLY, 24th August, 1787."

As a peer he had no legal right to interfere with the election of members to the House of Commons, but being a determined political Churchman he disregarded the law and the dictates of true Christian feeling, in order to keep a large and an inoffensive class of his fellow-countrymen in the chains of an iniquitous law as long as he could.

After a life of extraordinary usefulness, especially in the capacity of schoolmaster, Mr. Davies died at the advanced age of 82, July 3, 1827.

He was a celebrated poet. His translation of Gray's *Elegy* is incomparably superior to the original. He published a volume of his poetical compositions in 1822, under the title, "*Telyn Dewi*," *i.e.*, *David's Harp*. It has since passed through three or four editions. This, and a translation of Scougal's "*Life of God in the Soul of Man*," are, we believe, his only contributions to Welsh literature.

A more benevolent, kind-hearted, and inoffensive man than Davies, of Castellhowell, never lived. "He was the very soul of kindness and fine feeling." His fear of wounding the feelings of his fellow-men was probably the reason why he was always so cautious not to introduce any controverted points

into his sermons ; for which his Unitarian biographer blames him, taking for granted, we suppose, that, had he preached on any doctrinal subject, his views would have been favourable to Unitarianism. Mr. Davies had three sons in the ministry, among the Unitarians—Mr. David Davies, of Neath, Mr. Timothy Davies, of Evesham, and Mr. Thomas Davies his youngest son.

EBENEZER RICHARD.

This most estimable minister was the eldest son, by his second wife, of Mr. Henry Richard, a useful and acceptable preacher in the Calvinistic Methodist connexion for sixty years. Ebenezer was born at Trefin, a small village in Pembrokeshire, December 5, 1781. He was brought up from his infancy in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In the fifteenth year of his age he was admitted to the Lord's Supper. About his eighteenth or nineteenth year he left his father's house, and opened a day school at Dinas, a village between Fishguard and Newport. Some time after settling there, he became the subject of very deep and painful convictions of sin. His mental agony so increased day after day, that both the health of his body and the sanity of his mind were nearly upset. He was obliged to give up the school, and return to his parents. For several days he endeavoured to satisfy his conscience, and the demands of God's law, by going about to establish his own righteousness. Fastings, prayers, and painful penances were repeatedly tried in vain. At length a sudden light on the gospel plan of justification shined into his mind, and he found peace in believing. Referring to the night when his happy deliverance occurred, he remarks :—"July 1, 1801. This night was the most awful in my life, but I hope that it was the beginning of an endless *day* to me."

The storm being over, he returned to Dinas, and resumed his school. Though before a strictly moral character, his friends there, on his return to them, observed a marked change in him. The heavenliness of his experience, and the unction which characterized his public prayers, led his religious friends

to expect that he would soon be called to occupy a public and an important sphere in the Church of Christ.

In compliance with the urgent request of the society at Dinas, he commenced preaching, and was soon after, according to the regulations of the connexion, examined at the monthly meeting of the county Association, and admitted to be a regular preacher. The venerable Jones, of Llangan, remarked to a friend respecting him and his brother, Mr. Thomas Richard, who had commenced preaching soon after him, "Those two boys preach like two angels."

In 1806, Mr. Richard settled in the family of Major Bowen, Llwynygwair, who then resided at Cardigan, as private tutor to that gentleman's children. He lived happily in that pious family for three years, and was eminently useful in the town and the surrounding country. In the year 1809 he married Mary, daughter of Mr. W. Williams, of Tregaron, and then removed to that place, which he made his home for the remaining years of his life.

Mr. Richard was one of the thirteen Methodist preachers ordained at Llandilo, August 8, 1811, and he was the youngest of the number. In 1810 he was appointed the secretary of the county Association; and in 1813, according to the advice of Mr. Charles, of Bala, he was elected secretary of the General Association of the connexion in South Wales. He discharged the arduous duties of that responsible office with consummate skill, and to the entire satisfaction of all to the day of his death.

Several years previous to his decease he had become very corpulent, notwithstanding his rigidly abstemious habits and incessant labours. His corpulence brought on a kind of lethargy, repeated attacks of which threatened his life; and on the 9th of March, 1837, it proved fatal, very unexpectedly to his family and friends.

Ebenezer Richard was one of the most extensively useful and influential ministers in the Principality. Few men in any age have exhibited a more happy combination of a greater variety of useful gifts, natural and acquired. He was most amiable and yet resolute; ardently pious, without the least

tincture of sanctimoniousness ; always affecting as a preacher, and at times quite overpowering ; remarkably skilful and prudent as chief manager of the affairs of the connexion, and incessantly diligent in the performance of his various duties.

He was one of the first and the principal instrument in establishing Sunday schools in South Wales. All the other denominations, as well as his own, are now reaping the abundant fruits of his labour in that department of Christian usefulness.

The extent and variety of this excellent minister's labours are astonishing. His sons, in their interesting memoirs of their father, have given from his diaries the following account of the work which he performed in the last twenty-two years of his life :—

The number of times he preached	. . .	7,048
" " " administered the		
Lord's Supper	. . . . .	1,360
" " " administered Baptism		824
The public meetings he attended	. . . . .	651
The miles he travelled	. . . . .	59,092

Mr. Richard was a most firm and conscientious Nonconformist, and in that respect was far in advance of his Calvinistic Methodist brethren generally, whose Nonconformity forty years ago arose more from circumstances than from conscience. Soon after the separation of the connexion from the Established Church, determined efforts were made to induce him to receive episcopal ordination, which he resolutely refused.

The well-known and universally respected Henry Richard, secretary of the Peace Society, is a son worthy of such a father as Ebenezer Richard.

JOHN JENKINS, D.D.

This extraordinary person is one of the most remarkable instances of self-educated men. He was born in the parish of Llangynider, Breconshire, November 28, 1779. His father being only a labourer, with a family of seven children depen-

dent upon him, could give them no advantages of education whatever. John Jenkins never spent a day at school in his life, and was in the fifteenth year of his age when he began to learn the alphabet. He was then a farmer's servant in his native parish. His employer was a good reader, and a regular attendant on the ministry of the Antipædobaptist ministers, who preached in the neighbourhood occasionally. At that time Mr. Morgan John Rees, of Pontypool, visited Llangynider, among other places, to urge the inhabitants to set up Sunday and week-night schools, for the benefit of the neglected working classes. Mr. Rees had also prepared suitable school books in the Welsh language; John Jenkins bought one of them for threepence, and after receiving a few lessons at a night school set up in the parish, he learnt to read the Welsh Bible. On the 29th of November he was admitted to the communion of the Antipædobaptist church at Llanwenarth. In the 21st year of his age he began to exercise his gifts as a preacher. He was at that time working in the mine at Sirhowy. Being for some days disabled by a sore leg from following his employment, he requested a fellow-lodger to write a copy for him, that he might learn the art of writing. Though he had never used a pen before, he became in one day able to write such a hand that others could easily read. In the twenty-second year of his age he married a widow, with a family, who at once became dependent upon the labour of his hands. He worked hard on weekdays, and every Sabbath preached two or three times to different congregations, often walking fifteen or twenty miles to and from the places where he had to preach.

On the 21st of May, 1806, he was ordained to the pastoral office over the newly-formed church at Llangynider; but he had still to follow his secular employment, as the remuneration which he received from the church scarcely amounted to three pounds a year. In the year 1808 he accepted an invitation from the ancient church at Hengoed, Glamorganshire. His salary there, again, did not for some years exceed £16 a year, so that he had to work for the support of his family. Soon after his removal to Hengoed he began to write a *Body of Divinity*, which was published in one octavo volume in 1811.

This work, considering the disadvantages under which the author laboured, is an extraordinary performance. He began in the year 1817 to write his Commentary on the Bible, which he finished in 1831. The work was published in three large quarto volumes. It is throughout characterized by sound common sense, and nowhere disfigured by strange and extravagant views. He also published, from time to time, a large number of essays on different religious subjects. In 1852 the University of Lewisburgh, America, conferred upon him the honorary degree of *Doctor of Divinity*—an honour never more deservedly bestowed. This excellent man finished his remarkably active, useful, and successful career on June 5, 1853, in the 74th year of his age.

Dr. Jenkins was unquestionably one of the brightest ornaments of the Antipædobaptist denomination in Wales, and an honour to the Nonconforming body at large. The difficulties through which he worked his way are almost without a parallel. Though rigidly zealous for his peculiar views of baptism, and at times indiscreetly obtruding them on the public, yet his generally unassuming and agreeable behaviour, the spotless purity of his character, his sterling worth, and undoubted sincerity, endeared him to the best men of all denominations. As a preacher he was always acceptable and edifying, and often remarkably affecting. In doctrine he was a high Calvinist, of Dr. Gill's school. His Autobiography, with additions by his sons, is a most interesting work. Dr. Jenkins had four sons, two of whom died lately, Mr. John Jenkins, a missionary among the Bretons in France, and Mr. Llewelyn Jenkins, a respectable merchant, and a lay preacher in his late father's church.

HUGH HUGHES,

An eminently useful Wesleyan minister, was born in the parish of Llanor, near Pwllheli, Caernarvonshire, September 14, 1778. His parents were members of the Calvinistic Methodist connexion until the beginning of the present century, when they joined the Wesleyans. Their son, though religiously educated, spent the first twenty-seven years of his life in an

unconverted state. He was by occupation a gardener. While in the employ of a gentleman near Liverpool, in 1805, he accompanied his brother—who had come from Wales to visit him, and was then a local preacher—to the Welsh Wesleyan chapel in that town. From that time he became a regular attendant, and soon joined the Society. He commenced preaching October 24, 1806, and in the following year was appointed by the Conference to be one of the travelling preachers on the circuit of Dolgellau. From that time to the year 1843, when his health failed, he exercised his ministry with remarkable acceptance and success, chiefly in South Wales. He filled the responsible office of chairman of the Second South Wales district for fourteen years. In the year 1834 he was chosen one of the “legal hundred”—an honour never before conferred on a Welsh minister. His mind in the latter years of his life was in a remarkably heavenly frame. He died triumphantly at his residence at Caermarthen, on the 17th of December, 1855, in the 78th year of his age.

Hugh Hughes was an exceedingly amiable and inoffensive man, respected by all who knew him. He was always on friendly terms with his brethren of other denominations. Though not endowed with extraordinary preaching talents, few ministers, if any, in his own or the other sections of the Christian Church, have been more signally useful than he. He translated some portions of Wesley’s “Notes on the New Testament” into Welsh; published several pamphlets, and was for some time editor of the “Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd.” His Autobiography, edited by his son-in-law, Mr. Isaac Jenkins, is a most instructive and entertaining work.

We deeply regret that we cannot afford space for more than a bare catalogue of the names of several other eminent ministers of this period. John Griffiths, of Caernarvon; Griffith Hughes, of Groeswen; William Jones, of Bridgend; James Griffiths, of St. David’s; David Morgan, of Llanfyllin, and Michael Jones, of Bala, among the Independents; David Charles, John Evans, of Llwynyffortun; Thomas Jones, of Denbigh; and John Jones, of Talysarn, among the Calvinistic Methodists; Joseph Harries, of Swansea; John Philip Davies, of Tredegar;

Francis Hiley, of Llanwenarth, &c., among the Antipædo-baptists; were all men of brilliant talents, extensive usefulness, and national celebrity.

The following Tables will furnish our readers with a tolerably correct view of the present state and numerical strength of the four leading denominations in Wales:—

THE INDEPENDENTS.

The statistics of this denomination have not been collected since the year 1715 till the beginning of this year (1861). In January last we addressed a circular letter to every church throughout Wales—Monmouthshire included—and to every Welsh church in England, and succeeded in obtaining replies from them all, without a single exception. The result of our inquiries is as follows:—

County.	Chapels.	Ministers.	Lay Preachers	Members or Commu- nicants.	Attendants at the Sab- bath Schools	Hearers, exclusive of Members.
Anglesea	36	15	19	3587	3204	3206
Caernarvon	67	30	40	7095	6417	6376
Merioneth	46	16	18	3611	3380	2250
Denbigh	43	22	26	3517	4604	4603
Flint	32	16	13	1648	2299	2576
Montgomery	66	26	16	4189	4673	4119
Radnor	9	6	6	436	644	1333
Brecknock	38	22	13	3775	3477	4445
Monmouth... ..	61	40	38	7459	8042	11186
Glamorgan... ..	142	88	123	23821	24228	29789
Caermarthen	78 ¹	40	57	15774	11881	15154
Pembroke	63	32	22	8228	7092	9129
Cardigan	55	23	28	11658	6505	7698
Welsh Churches in England	30	14	12	2849	2319	2587
Total	766	390	431	97647	88765	104351

The schoolrooms and other preaching places, which amount to about one hundred, are not included in the above number of chapels.

¹ Several chapels in this county are reckoned with the adjoining counties of Cardigan, Pembroke, and Glamorgan—being connected with the Associations of those counties.

THE CALVINISTIC METHODISTS.

We give the statistics of this body from their own organ, the *Dyddiadur Methodistiaidd*, for 1861. The returns of course were made in the previous year.

County.	Chapels.	Ministers.	Lay Preachers	Members or Communicants.	Attendants at the Sabbath Schools	Hearers, exclusive of Members.
Anglesea	71	21	14	10932	11083	14084
Caernarvon	111	48	20	15478	22913	27500
Merioneth	95	26	28	8765	13776	17802
Denbigh	75	14	23	4700	10500	14000
Flint	76	15	21	6021	11671	16047
Montgomery	107	20	27	4046	11290	12100
Brecknock	37	17	8	1700	3050	4300
Monmouth... ..	35	12	12	2199	3620	7000
Glamorgan	99	25	31	9378	13675	17000
Caermarthen	68	23	23	6263	8054	10000
Pembroke	39	22	12	2600	3000	6000
Cardigan	66	29	19	13565	16300	17000
Welsh Churches in England	58	34	16	4913	6318	11835
Total	937	296	254	90560	135250	174668

THE ANTIPÆDOBAPTISTS.

The statistics of this denomination, according to *Dyddiadur y Bedyddwyr* for 1861, by Mr. T. E. James, of Neath, stands thus :—

Anglesea	32	6	15	2876	3085	No returns
Caernarvon	25	11	12	1642	1259	"
Merioneth and Denbigh... ..	54	26	25	3981	4347	"
Flint	13	9	4	639	909	"
Montgomery, Radnor, and Brecknock	62	40	15	No returns.	No returns.	"
Monmouth	70	51	31	9569	7261	"
Glamorgan	107	79	89	15335	14319	"
Caermarthen	58	47	19	6498	4775	"
Pembroke	63	41	14	8678	5266	"
Cardigan	22	12	10	1685	1232	"
Total	506	322	234	50903	42453	

THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

The numerical strength of this body in the Principality, including Monmouthshire and a few Welsh congregations in England, according to the returns published in the Minutes of the Conference for 1860, and the *Dyddiadur Wesleyiadd* for 1859, is as follows :—

Chapels and other Preaching Places	...	...	533
Ordained Ministers	...	...	64
Local Preachers	...	...	500
Communicants	...	...	24395

Among the minor sects, the *Primitive Methodists* are the most numerous. There are about one hundred congregations of this denomination in the thirteen counties. Most of them are small. The aggregate of the attendance may be from ten to twelve thousand.

The Wesleyan Association, the New Connexion, the Bible Christians, and the Wesleyan Reformers have forty-eight small congregations, most of which are in North Wales and Monmouthshire.

The Unitarians have thirty congregations—all in South Wales. About five or six thousand of the population of the Principality may be reckoned as belonging to this body. The Quakers, or Friends, who were in former ages comparatively numerous in Wales, are at present the smallest of all the Nonconforming bodies. Their meeting-houses are not above seven in number, and the attendants do not exceed six or seven hundred persons ; but there are among them some of the most active and philanthropic individuals in the Principality.

To enable the reader to see at one glance the gradual progress of Nonconformity in the Principality during the last hundred and fifty years, we give the number of Congregations at five different periods.

1716.	1742.	1775.	1816.	1861.
110.	105. ¹	171.	993.	2927.

The Welsh are now emphatically a nation of Nonconformists. The bulk of the very small minority, who make up the congregations of the Established Church, are emigrants from England, and some Anglicized Welshmen.

Desperate efforts were made by Churchmen in former ages to crush Nonconformity by persecution. In the present age they have changed their policy, and attempt to accomplish the same thing by means of National or Church schools. Enormous sums have been and are still voted by the Committee of Council on Education towards the establishment and support

¹ The branch congregations and preaching stations are not included in this number.

of such schools in districts where hardly any but the children of Nonconformists could be expected to attend them. Time will tell whether a body of schoolmasters will succeed in accomplishing, in the nineteenth century, what hosts of clergymen, by preaching persecution and heading violent mobs, and a large number of furious magistrates by inflicting heavy fines, imprisonments, and various other punishments, have utterly failed to accomplish in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The present attitude of Churchmen and Nonconformists in Wales towards each other is extremely disagreeable. Churchmen, with many honourable exceptions among the laity and some among the clergy, regard the prevalence of Nonconformity as a great evil, and consequently keep aloof from their Nonconforming neighbours, and refuse to co-operate with them in the promotion of any benevolent or philanthropic scheme: the Nonconformists, on the other hand, consider it as the greatest blessing ever conferred upon the Welsh nation, and regard the connection of the Episcopal Church with the State as the real source of all the persecutions which have disgraced former ages, and of most of the bigotry, ill-feeling, and religious jealousies which disgrace the present age. The contents of the foregoing pages may enable the impartial reader to decide which of the two opinions is the correct one.





CHAPTER VII.

FROM A.D. 1861 TO A.D. 1882.

No stirring events to be recorded—Chapel-building—Denominational Unions—The Calvinistic Methodists—The Baptists—The Congregationalists—English Services—The Statistics of the Welsh Nonconformists—Biographical Sketches—T. Aubrey, Henry Rees, David Rees, David Howells, W. Ambrose, David Williams, J. Prichard, D.D., Isaac Jenkins, John Parry, D.D., Thomas Thomas, D.D.

THE history of the Nonconforming churches of Wales during the last twenty-one years has not been signalized by any instances of cruel persecutions stirring doctrinal and ritualistic controversies, or any widespread revival of religion, such as we had to give an account of in the former chapters of our history. Nevertheless, in the absence of anything of that description, many things have been accomplished, and are still being carried on, which have an important bearing on the welfare and the progress of the churches, and which ought to be recorded and transmitted to future generations.

Chapel-building deserves particular notice. Most of the chapels built fifty and sixty years ago, with very rare exceptions, exhibited no architectural taste whatever. They were plain, unsightly buildings, more like barns or warehouses than places of worship. The comparative smallness and poverty of the congregations partly accounted for this; and also it was no easy matter to persuade the descendants of people who had been compelled for generations to worship God in caves, barns, and obscure cottages, that neat and costly places of worship were

necessary and becoming. The least architectural ornament—pews instead of bare benches, and even brass chandeliers instead of clumsy iron candlesticks, the workmanship of the village blacksmith—were regarded by many as sinful innovations and signs of pride, unbecoming the humble worshippers of God. Those good people never called to mind the fact that the plan of the first place of worship erected on this earth came direct from heaven, and that the structure constructed in accordance to it was a very costly one. Those generations of mistaken Christians have passed away, and have been succeeded by a generation of more expanded ideas and a greater sense of propriety. There is now hardly any district in the Principality without a chapel or chapels which are ornaments to the locality. The old buildings are almost everywhere replaced by larger and superior structures, and hundreds of new chapels have also been lately erected where there were none before. In the Rhondda Valley, Glamorganshire, thirty years ago, there were only three small Dissenting places of worship; but now the number is seventy-one, and some of these are large enough to seat a thousand or twelve hundred people. In several agricultural and colliery districts, magnificent chapels, worthy of the most fashionable English city, are to be seen in the midst of rows of workmen's cottages. The amount laid out by the Nonconformists of Wales within the last twenty-five years, in the rebuilding or renovation of old chapels and the erection of new ones, exceeds a million and a half. Congregations of farmers generally manage to pay for their new chapels on the day of opening, or soon after, but congregations of working men in the colliery and manufacturing districts take ten or fifteen years to do it.

A most absurd fabrication respecting the chapels of Welsh Nonconformists has lately been circulated in England, and repeated as an undoubted truth in a speech by no less a person than the late Archbishop of Canterbury, viz., that these chapels are built by companies of shareholders, as railways are constructed; that the shares in chapels are marketable commodities like shares in other commercial corporations, and that the shareholders have control over the ministers and congregations!

This preposterous story was evidently invented by some Churchman, probably with a view to lessen the disgrace of buying and selling livings in the Established Church, by alleging that Non-conformists are virtually doing the same thing. No one who has the least knowledge of the religious condition of Wales will give credence to such a monstrous fabrication.

Another feature of this period of our history is the formation of unions in the various denominations for securing greater and more efficient co-operation in carrying out the designs of the various denominational organizations. The Calvinistic Methodists for generations had two provincial Associations—one in South Wales and another in North Wales. "Those have been to all intents and purposes two separate organizations, quite independent of each other. Ministers from the South would attend the North Wales Associations and *vice versa*; but the brethren from one province did not feel that they had a right to take part in the business deliberations of the other. The two sections felt that they were one, and neither could take an important step without consulting the other; but there was no meeting held at which the whole body was represented. For a long time this deficiency was felt, and a few years ago measures were taken to supply it. After a conference of ministers and others from the two provinces, and a lengthened correspondence between the different Associations, it was resolved to establish a General Assembly of the whole connexion, to hold its meetings alternately in the north and the south. The first meeting was held at Swansea, in May, 1864, and the eighth at Liverpool, in May, 1871. This annual gathering is becoming increasingly important, and will no doubt ultimately become that which their General Assemblies are to other Presbyterian bodies—the legislating body for the whole connexion."¹ This General Assembly consists of two ministers and two deacons from each monthly meeting or County Union, all the ex-moderators of the Assembly, the presidents of the South and North Wales Associations, and the members of the committees of the various connexional organizations, such as the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, the denominational literature, the Sunday-

¹ Williams' "Welsh Calvinistic Methodism," pp. 215, 216.

schools, the Sustentation Fund, &c. Everything is carried on in the most orderly manner by this methodical, active, and progressive Christian body. The value of the connexional property is estimated at more than one million one hundred thousand sterling. The debt remaining on the chapels in 1881 was over three hundred and eleven thousand pounds, and the sum collected in that year towards reducing it amounted to more than thirty-one thousand. The connexion has three monthly periodicals, the average monthly circulation of which in 1881 was 48,018.

The Baptists' Union of the churches of Wales and Monmouthshire was formed in the year 1866, and held its first meeting at Caermarthen in 1867. Its design is to "secure and strengthen brotherly love and union among the ministers and the Baptized churches who profess Calvinistic or Evangelical sentiments; to secure co-operation in everything which tends to promote the interests of the cause of Christ generally, and that of the Baptized churches particularly; to gather correct statistics of the churches, the societies, the institutions, the colleges, &c., of the Baptists in Wales, and throughout the world; and to inquire into the state of the property, the institutions, the literature, and everything else which may be of importance to the Baptists of Wales."¹

The members of the Union are the minister and a messenger from every church which does not admit any one who has not been baptized on a profession of his faith in Christ to the Lord's Supper, and also every regular member of such churches who subscribes two shillings and sixpence a year to the fund of the Union. This Union, while it disclaims all legislative authority over the churches, and recognizes the perfect independency of each church, has formed and promoted several schemes advantageous to the denomination: such as a fund to advance sums of money without interest to churches under burdens of chapel debts; the publication of denominational literature; a fund to support disabled ministers, &c. The Baptist body has made greater progress in Wales since the formation of this Union than it made in so short a time at any other period of its

¹ The Report of the Welsh Baptists' Union for 1882.

history. During the last ten years ninety-eight new churches were formed, and the increase in the number of communicants has amounted to 18,436.

The Congregational Union of Wales was virtually formed at Swansea in the year 1871, when the Autumnal Meetings of the Congregational Union of England and Wales were held in that town, and its first meeting was held at Caermarthen in the year 1872. This Union professes to aim at nothing more than to furnish the ministers and the public-spirited members of the churches, from all parts of the Principality, with annual opportunities for brotherly consultation and deliberation on the spiritual welfare of the denomination, and to stir each other to greater activity and co-operation for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. It has never attempted to form any denominational organization, nor to exercise any control over existing ones, like the Calvinistic Methodist and the Baptist Unions. The principal reason for this omission is, that some disaffected persons are in the habit of representing all combined efforts to do good as sinister attempts to deprive the churches of their independency—a most groundless insinuation. The Baptist churches are as independent as any congregational church could desire to be, while their Union has originated and carries on several most useful schemes for the benefit of the denomination. When will the Congregational Churches of Wales learn wisdom, and cease to listen to the utterances of persons who will neither do anything themselves nor leave others to do all the service they can to their denomination?

At the annual meetings of the Union two special sermons are delivered by ministers selected by the committee, papers are read at the conferences, and speeches are delivered at the public meeting on the evening of the second day of the sitting. The chairman's address, the sermons, the papers, and the speeches are all published in the annual reports. All the meetings from 1872 to 1882 have been attended by hundreds of ministers and influential laymen, and have proved remarkably successful and edifying.

Within the last fifty years the English-speaking population of

the Principality has rapidly increased year after year, but no combined and earnest effort to provide the means of grace for these teeming multitudes had been attempted by any Nonconforming body, except the Wesleyans, until thirty years ago. Several English churches were formed in the largest towns by local zeal and liberality; but the first attempt made by the Congregationalists to arouse public feeling on the subject was at a large conference held at Beaufort, Monmouthshire, in the year 1853. That important conference, with the stirring appeals to Welsh and English Christians which it sent forth, awakened a degree of attention to the subject which had never been witnessed before. The movement then set on foot led to the formation of several English churches in populous districts, and ultimately to the formation of *The Society for Promoting the Establishment and Support of English Congregational Churches in South Wales and Monmouthshire*. This Society was actually formed at a Conference held at Cardiff, November 27, 1860, when Mr. S. Morley, M.P., Mr. H. Richard, M.P., Mr. W. D. Wills, of Bristol, Mr. C. Jupe, of Mere, and other English gentlemen were present. This useful society during the last twenty-two years has assisted in forming and supporting over eighty English churches in the Principality. In June, 1867, Mr. Morley offered to the committee of the society the princely sum of five thousand pounds towards the erection of twenty-five chapels, on condition that each chapel should have one sitting for every ten shillings of his contribution towards it, and that the erection of the last of the twenty-five should be commenced before the 11th of June, 1870. The committee accepted this generous offer, and the result was the erection of twenty-one chapels in nineteen different localities, and six different counties, containing 9,418 sittings, at an outlay of nearly seventeen thousand pounds, towards which Mr. Morley contributed £4,180, and Mr. Charles Jupe £450.

A society for the same purpose was formed in North Wales about six years ago, through the energetic efforts of the Rev. D. Burford Hooke, then of Mold. That society has already accomplished wonders in the erection of chapels, and the support of English ministers in various localities where they

were greatly needed. The Congregationalists have now about one hundred and seventy-five English churches in the twelve counties of Wales and Monmouthshire, but many more must be formed in order to prevent the extinction of the denomination in several districts, as the English language is spreading all over the country very rapidly.

The Calvinistic Methodists started a Home Missionary Society, on a small scale, as early as the year 1813, in North Wales, and another in South Wales in 1826; but these were chiefly intended at that time for the support of weak Welsh churches. Only a limited number of English churches were formed and supported by them. However, within the last thirty years this Christian body has exerted itself most energetically and liberally to form and support English churches throughout the Principality, wherever English-speaking people are numerous, and where other denominations had not occupied the field before them. There are one hundred and fifty-eight English churches in the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Connexion, but about forty of them are in the adjoining counties of England, such as Lancashire, Cheshire, &c. The Baptists also have about one hundred English churches in Wales.

Most of the leading ministers and laymen in the Nonconformist bodies are now awake to the importance of providing efficient English preaching for the masses of English-speaking people, who are to be found by the hundreds and thousands in almost every district from Cardiff to Holyhead, but the bulk of the Welsh congregations are very apathetic and reluctant to move in the matter. They should learn a lesson from the history of the Established Church in the Principality. Three hundred years ago the Episcopal Church had the whole field to herself; but through her neglect, or inability, to cultivate it properly, she has irrecoverably lost it—if Nonconformists will timely use the fair advantages with which Providence has furnished them. In former ages the Government appointed English bishops to all, or nearly all, the Welsh dioceses, and those naturally gave the best livings to their relatives and English friends, who were utterly ignorant of the language of the people. Most of the incumbents, also, of those parishes

where a nobleman or an esquire happened to reside, conducted the service in English at the most convenient hour of the Sabbath, and fixed a very early or a very late hour for the Welsh service, which would generally be performed by the curate. Such treatment disgusted the Welsh-speaking parishioners, and that, together with the superior preaching abilities of Dissenting ministers, who preached with great power and fervour in the language of the people, naturally made the Welsh a nation of Nonconformists. The Episcopal Church thus lost the people by forcing the English language into the service where it was not necessary, and the danger now is that Nonconformists shall lose them by neglecting to use the English where it is required.

The numerical strength of the largest Nonconformist bodies in the thirteen counties in the year 1882 is to be seen in the following tables. The statistics of the Calvinistic Methodists, the Baptists, and the Wesleyans, are copied from their respective Year Books, and those of the Congregationalists are from returns from each church received by the author between August and December, 1882.

THE CONGREGATIONALISTS.

Counties.	Places of Worship.	Ministers.	Lay Preachers	Church Members.	Sunday School Attendants.	Members and Hearers.
Glamorgan	278	169	102	38428	40035	95130
Caermarthen	111	65	25	19085	13995	33529
Cardigan	75	34	11	11689	7957	18732
Pembroke	77	39	12	8858	7248	18834
Brecknock	46	25	1	3226	2881	7753
Radnor	14	8	3	410	504	1967
Monmouth	77	57	24	7504	10193	23185
Merioneth	66	25	11	4541	5706	10865
Montgomery	73	24	13	3682	4887	9739
Denbigh	57	23	10	3697	6179	10267
Caernarvon	97	51	28	9909	10071	23139
Flint	38	21	13	2379	3339	7711
Anglesea	40	20	14	3210	3023	7771
Welsh Churches in England	34	19	25	4035	2719	7579
Total	1083	580	298 ¹	120653	118737	276201

¹ The students in the colleges are not included here. Their number is 108.

THE CALVINISTIC METHODISTS.

Counties.	Places of Worship.	Ministers.	Lay Preachers	Church Members.	Sunday School Attendants.	Members and Hearers.
Glamorgan	179	92	51	16140	24055	43752
Caermarthen	83	40	28	8154	9350	17626
Cardigan	124	58	34	12018	17825	24263
Pembroke	51	26	16	2882	3779	6153
Brecknock and Radnor	62	26	9	2626	4070	6900
Monmouth, &c.	55	48	20	3934	6112	10570
Merioneth	131	45	29	11618	17724	24331
Montgomery	117	43	27	5884	11061	14773
Denbigh	102	40	18	7804	13432	18353
Caernarvon	159	73	65	21236	28666	44465
Flint	104	36	26	6728	15026	19047
Anglesea	82	39	21	9819	12076	19638
Welsh and English Churches in England	94	44	27	10512	14409	24861
Total	1343	610	371	119355	177885	274605

The Calvinistic Methodist being a Welsh denomination, it properly includes in its denominational statistics the English churches which the Connexion has formed and supports in the border English counties. The number of these churches is about forty. Of the 610 ordained ministers in the Connexion, 354 have the pastoral oversight of 521 of the churches. The others are itinerant ministers, like the lay preachers, chiefly in their own counties, though they are virtually ministers to the whole Connexion.

THE BAPTISTS.

Counties.	Places of Worship.	Ministers.	Lay Preachers	Church Members.	Attendants at the Sunday School.
Denbigh, Flint, & Merioneth	95	53	65	4985	6204
Caernarvon	40	21	19	2495	2724
Anglesea	36	17	18	2245	2282
Montgomery and Radnor ...	44	34	18	2778	3209
Brecknock	28	22	5	1874	1549
Glamorgan (Welsh churches)	169	110	106	24336	29026
Monmouth	103	71	42	11757	16259
Caermarthen & Cardigan ...	92	79	25	13519	9734
Pembroke	84	53	19	10942	7705
Glamorgan and Caermarthen (English churches)	50	35	38	6441	12259
Total	741	495	355	81372	90951

The Welsh churches of this denomination in England are included in the returns of the Welsh County Associations.

THE WESLEYANS.

Places of Worship	926
Ordained Ministers	185
Local Preachers	710
Sunday Schools	567
Attendants at ditto	58,936
Communicants	32,146
Hearers, exclusive of Members	54,292

THE PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.

Places of Worship	193
Ordained Ministers	35
Local Preachers	550
Sunday Schools	154
Attendants at ditto	12,523
Communicants	6,010
Hearers, exclusive of Members	13,372

THE BIBLE CHRISTIANS.

Places of Worship	32
Church Members	1,240
Ministers	9
Local Preachers	75
Attendants at the Sunday Schools	2,436

THE UNITARIANS.

This denomination has thirty places of worship in South Wales and about five thousand adherents. All their ministers are well educated, and most of the people are very intelligent men. The district in which they are most numerous is the South of Cardiganshire, from Lampeter to Newcastle Emlyn.

There are four or five congregations of Methodist Free Churches, and three congregations of Scotch Presbyterians, in the Principality.

The Society of Friends is now the smallest of all the nonconforming denominations in Wales. A respected Friend has favoured the author with the following statement: "The meetings of the Society of Friends in Wales are five. The number of members 127, besides a few in scattered places; the total would certainly be under 150. They are mostly located in Radnorshire and Glamorganshire." These good people, in the last half of the seventeenth century and in the

first half of the eighteenth, were numerous in Wales, and all of them suffered the most cruel persecutions; but by their sufferings and philanthropic activity they did as much, if not more, than all the other denominations, to secure to the inhabitants of Wales the liberty and the privileges which we now enjoy. Small as their number now is, there are still among them some of the most excellent characters, worthy of their eminently good forefathers.

The foregoing tables show that the Nonconformists of Wales have 4,361 places of worship, 1,934 ordained ministers, 2,469 lay preachers, 361,406 church members, and no less than 463,468 children and adults receiving religious instruction in their Sabbath-schools. And yet these people, because they oppose State grants for teaching sectarian views in day-schools, are represented as advocates of "godless teaching"!

The statistics of the Nonconformist denominations are very instructive, and the parties concerned should draw important and practical lessons from them. The population of the twelve counties of Wales and Monmouthshire in 1861 was 1,286,411; and in 1881, 1,571,267—an increase of 22·14 per cent.; and the increase of church members in the four largest denominations during the same period was as follows:

The Baptists	...	...	...	...	...	48'21	per cent.
The Calvinistic Methodists	...	...	...	...	...	31'79	"
The Wesleyans	...	...	...	...	...	31'77	"
The Congregationalists	...	...	...	...	...	23'55	"

It is a matter of joy and devout thanksgiving that the increase of each of the four denominations is more than the increase of the population; but the Congregationalists should seriously consider why their increase is so much below that of the other three bodies. Is it to be attributed to the want of proper denominational zeal and activity?—to the constant insinuations that county associations and concerted action for denominational purposes tend to undermine the independency of the churches, and to Presbyterianise the denomination?—or to the culpable neglect of the churches to extend and work more efficiently their Sunday-schools? We are inclined to

attribute it equally to these three causes combined. While the attendants at the Sunday-schools of the Baptists outnumber their church members by nearly ten thousand, those of the Wesleyans by over twenty-six thousand, and those of the Calvinistic Methodists by more than fifty-eight thousand, the church members of the Congregationalists are nearly two thousand more than all who attend their Sunday-schools. This startling and painful fact proves the sad negligence and the inactivity of a large number of the members of the churches, and deserves the serious and the prayerful consideration of the whole denomination, for no Christian body can long sustain its position and prosper without strenuous efforts to impart religious instruction to the rising generation.

The division of Nonconformists into different sects is often spoken of by Churchmen as glaringly inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, but the religious history of Wales proves the contrary. Those few districts of the Principality which are given up to one denomination are the most ignorant and irreligious. How deplorable was the condition of the country when the Established Church had the whole field to herself. Variety of sects is healthy, and tends to promote Christian activity. Our soldiers are divided into different regiments, under different regulations and officers, though they all form but one body to oppose the common enemy. Were the whole army thrown into one promiscuous and unwieldy mass, confusion and disorder would be the inevitable result. If the Christian Church were made up of one huge body, Christian work could not possibly be carried on with anything like the same order and efficiency it is now carried on by the various religious denominations. What is wanted is, not uniformity, but a more thorough Christian feeling—love, and unity of aim to do good, and less bitterness, unholy rivalry, and proselytism. Wales, with all its fame for religiousness, has still among its population nearly half a million of men and women who are neither Churchmen nor Dissenters—people of no religion. All the religious bodies should exert themselves to the utmost to gather these outcasts into the fold of Christ before sitting down to devise plans to make proselytes from each other.

Through the self-denying labours of our active and suffering forefathers, Wales has been changed from a wilderness of irreligion and superstition into a well-cultivated garden of Evangelical Protestant Nonconformity. Shall the ground so cultivated and planted by the incomparable industry of former generations, and watered by their tears, be again permitted to be overrun by the poisonous nightshades of infidelity or the worthless weeds of superstition? God forbid that that should ever be the case.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

A considerable number of very able, eminent, and useful men in the different denominations were taken from us during the last twenty-one years, but we cannot afford space for short sketches of more than two or three of each denomination.

THOMAS AUBREY

“Was born at Cefncoedycymer, near Merthyr Tydvil, on May 13, 1808. He was converted to God in the fifteenth year of his age. The following year he commenced preaching, and became at once very acceptable and useful. In 1826 he was recommended by the Welsh District Meeting to the work of the ministry as ‘a young man of more than ordinary ministerial abilities.’ He soon took a prominent place among the most popular preachers of his native land; which distinction he maintained to the end of his laborious life. The demand for his public services was consequently great, and he did not spare himself. This special work, combined with heavy circuit duties, made his exertions truly surprising. In 1854 he was appointed chairman of the North Wales District, and continued in that office for eleven successive years. At the very commencement of that period he turned his attention to the heavy debts resting on most of the chapels within the district; and, in connection with a few others, devised a plan for their effectual relief. The North Wales Chapel Loan Fund was established, and by its quiet but effective working, chapel trusts have been extensively relieved, and the work generally

greatly improved. He understood Methodism thoroughly, and loved it heartily, and anxiously desired to promote its adaptation to the peculiar circumstances of the Principality. He had the entire confidence of his brethren, the love and esteem of all. In 1865 want of health compelled him to become a supernumerary; but he still continued his public labours, as far as his strength permitted, with unabated zeal, devotion, and earnestness. He was truly a great man, a mighty preacher, a faithful, wise, and loving pastor. His mental faculties were of a high order; vigorous, penetrating, inventive, and logical. His application to study was intense; his rule was to be in his study at four o'clock in the morning. He was a diligent reader, and was well versed in the writings of the best divines, both ancient and modern. He turned his powerful mind chiefly, though not exclusively, to theology and mental and moral philosophy; and his views on these subjects were clear and comprehensive. But the distinguishing element in his public character was the remarkable gift of eloquence with which it pleased God to endow him, and which he carefully cultivated, and cheerfully consecrated to the highest purposes. That eloquence was sometimes calm and subdued, at other times vehement and elevated. He studied his native language, admired its genius, discovered much of its neglected wealth, and wielded its oratorical force with singular ability and success. His sermons were prepared with care, but delivered with freedom. The arrangement generally presented a complete and elevated conception of the subjects discussed: the style of treatment, alike argumentative and ornamental, being full of original and striking thought. The delivery of his discourses was characterized by deep emotion and great energy being calculated to stir up Christian believers to seek a closer communion with God, and more thorough self-sacrifice for Christ and His cause. During the last four months of his life, when his failing health compelled him to cease entirely from public duties, he enjoyed great peace in secret communion with God. Though his sufferings were very severe, he often said, with great emphasis, in his native language, 'I am thankful and happy.' The closing scene was most trium-

phant. His last words were, 'Joyful ! joyful !' with uplifted hands and looking upwards, with a countenance beaming with delight and joy. He peacefully breathed his last at Rhyl, on November 15, 1867, in the sixtieth year of his age, and the forty-second of his ministry."¹

From our personal knowledge of Mr. Aubrey we can endorse every word of the foregoing sketch ; and may add that, with all his superiority as a thinker and a preacher, and his unswerving devotedness to the service of his own denomination, he was humble, unpretending, sociable, and perfectly free from bigotry. Mr. Aubrey, as far as we know, published nothing in his lifetime, except a small volume on Baptism, and some contributions to the periodicals of the Welsh Wesleyans ; but his posthumous works, consisting of sermons and essays on various subjects, are about to be published in two large volumes.

HENRY REES,

An eminent minister in the Calvinistic Methodist Connexion, was born at a place called Chwibren Isaf, in the parish of Llansannan, Denbighshire, February 15, 1798. His parents, David and Anne Rees, were eminently godly people and faithful members of the Methodist church in the neighbourhood. He was under the influence of religion from his infancy, and in his fourteenth year was admitted to the communion of the church of which his parents were members, and from that time to the day of his removal to a better world he adorned his profession in word and deed. He was a youth of a remarkably retiring and studious disposition. His Bible and religious books were always his most agreeable companions, and with them he spent all his leisure hours. In 1816 he expressed a desire to live with the Rev. Thomas Jones of Denbigh as his servant, evidently with a view of getting better advantages for improvement in knowledge than he could possibly get at home. Mr. Jones cheerfully received him to his family, and there he found a home which exactly suited his taste—quietness to do his work on the farm during the daytime, and access to a large library for reading in the night.

¹ The Minutes of the Conference for 1868, pp. 11-13.

He remained in Mr. Jones's service for two years, and when that gentleman gave up his farm, young Rees agreed to serve a respectable and religious farmer near Abergele. During his year of service there he commenced preaching, and delivered his first sermon at Llanelian, between Abergele and Conway, in the last week of March or the first week of April, 1819. He became at once a very acceptable and popular preacher. At the end of his year of service near Abergele he returned home to his parents, where he remained for a few months. Before the end of the year 1819 he went to the school of the Rev. T. Lloyd, of Abergele, and during the short time he was there he acquired so much knowledge of the English language as to be able to read with profit the works of English divines.

The Calvinistic Methodists at that time overlooked the Scripture which says that "the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." They expected all their preachers to depend for their livelihood on some secular calling, and regarded the small remuneration given them for their service as merely intended to cover their travelling expenses and the loss of time in their worldly occupations. Under these circumstances Mr. Rees, like his brethren, generally had to look out for something to do to earn his daily bread. Being so fond of books and reading, he made up his mind that the business most congenial to his taste would be that of a bookbinder. In the year 1821 he went to Shrewsbury to learn the craft of bookbinding. He spent a few months in a bookbinder's workshop, and learnt to stitch sheets together and bind them in some shape; but, as his brother, Dr. William Rees, observes, instead of binding the books, *the books bound him*, for he had no taste for anything but reading, studying, and preaching. He was sent to the world, not to be a farmer, a bookbinder, or to follow any other secular calling, but to be a preacher of the highest order, and Providence in due time placed him in the position for which he was intended and qualified to occupy. After working for some time in the bookbinder's establishment, he went to the school of Mr. Beynon, Congregational minister, Dorrington, in order to improve his knowledge of English. During the

time he was with the bookbinder, and at the school, he preached on the Sabbaths to a small congregation of Welsh Methodists at Shrewsbury, and occasionally to other congregations in the adjoining counties of Montgomery and Denbigh. Finding that he was about returning to Wales, the Welsh friends at Shrewsbury pressed him to remain with them. They promised him his board and lodgings for preaching to them three Sundays in the month. He accepted their offer, and laboured among them for nearly fifteen years. In his comparative retirement, with a small Welsh congregation in an English town, he found more leisure and quietness for study and mental improvement than it would have been possible for him to find in Wales, where the calls for his service, from places far and near, would have been constant. During his stay at Shrewsbury he regularly attended the Associations in Wales, and made preaching excursions through the country now and then. Year after year his fame as a great and popular preacher was spreading more and more, until his name became a household word throughout the Principality. He was ordained June 15, 1827, at the Association at Bala. In October, 1830, he married a worthy young lady, who proved a helpmeet for him to the day of his death. They had three children, two of whom died in their infancy. Their only surviving child is the wife of Richard Davies, Esq., M.P. for Anglesea. In 1836 the large Welsh Methodist churches in Liverpool invited him to settle among them. He accepted their invitation, and removed there about Christmas in that year, and there he continued to labour with constantly growing reputation to the close of his illustrious career. He died of inflammation of the lungs, after nine days' illness, at the house of his son-in-law, February 18, 1869.

Henry Rees was a remarkably devout man; he lived in constant communion with his heavenly Father, and the consequence was that his private conversations with his friends, as well as his public ministrations, were almost invariably pervaded by Divine unction. The celebrated John Elias, while supplying at Liverpool, stayed one Saturday night at Mr. Rees's house. Sunday night he stayed at the house of another

friend. After supper he said to his friend, "Well, it is no wonder that Mr. Rees preaches so well and effective. This morning, between four and five o'clock, I overheard him, when he was not aware that any one in the house was hearing him, earnestly praying for Divine assistance in the work of the day. He draws his strength from the Almighty."

As a preacher he was quite a model. It is not too much to say that a more faultless preacher never stood before a congregation. His very appearance in the pulpit was almost a sermon in itself. His person was neat and comely, and in the expression of his countenance there was a happy combination of amiableness and solemnity, without the least shade of gloomy pharisaical sanctimoniousness. His sermons were orderly arranged, carefully prepared, full of sound scriptural matter, striking illustrations, and admirably adapted to arouse the consciences of the careless, and to instruct and console earnest and sincere Christians.

His language was so chaste and appropriate, that hearers of the most refined taste would have nothing to object to, but everything to admire; and, on the other hand, so plain that the illiterate could understand every word. This model preacher "sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written (and spoken) was upright, even words of truth." His voice was clear, mellow, tender, and pathetic, and his delivery was calm, solemn, and dignified, always acceptable and effective, and often quite overpowering.

Mr. Rees was highly respected by the Welsh nation universally, and his influence in his own denomination was unlimited, naturally arising from the holiness of his character, the superiority of his talents, his extensive usefulness, and the amiability of his nature. After the death of John Elias, he was by universal consent regarded as the leading minister in the Calvinistic Methodist body. Mr. Rees published nothing except some sermons and essays in the denominational periodicals, but three volumes of his valuable sermons were published from his manuscripts after his death.

DAVID REES

Was born November 14, 1801, at Gellilwyd, a farm-house in the parish of Trelech, Caermarthenshire. His parents were respectable tenant farmers in comfortable circumstances. Though his father was not a church member for some years after his birth, yet he was a strictly moral man, prayed with his family morning and evening, and regularly attended public worship at the Congregational chapel in the neighbourhood; thus David Rees was brought up from his childhood under a measure of religious influence. It was in his seventeenth year that he became a communicant of the Congregational church at Trelech. Before his admission to the church he was a regular attendant at the Sabbath-school, and afterwards he became more prominent as a teacher and leader of the choir. When about twenty years of age he received a legacy of about six or seven hundred pounds after a relative who died in London. He then gave up working on the farm with his father, and went to school to Haverfordwest, and remained there for some months. On his return home, his pastor, Mr. Jones, and the church urged him to commence preaching. In the month of August, 1823, he preached his first sermon. Soon after he went to the Grammar School at Caermarthen. About five months after he entered that school, he had such a severe attack of illness that his life was despaired of. When he began to recover, he was advised to remove to another district for change of air. He went to Newtown, Montgomeryshire, where the Congregational Academy was then kept, and where his friend the Rev. Samuel Bowen was the junior tutor. He entered the preparatory school connected with the academy, and about eighteen months after he was admitted to the academy. During the four years he remained there he was a hard and diligent student, and ultimately became a respectable scholar. His fame as a preacher of remarkable power and eloquence had spread far and near throughout the churches, so that he received pressing invitations from several places long before the termination of his college course; but he positively refused to leave before the end of his fourth year. He then preferred Llanelly, Caermarthenshire, to any

other place. He accepted the invitation of the church at Capel Als, and continued to labour efficiently there from the 15th of July, 1829, the day of his ordination, until illness and death terminated his illustrious and extraordinary useful career. He died, after a tedious illness of nearly two years, March 31, 1869, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

Mr. Rees was of short stature, moderately stout, and firmly built, quick in his movements, and always remarkably active. The stern expression of his countenance led most people who were not intimate with him to regard him as a surly-tempered and tyrannical person; but those who knew him intimately invariably found him one of the most tender-hearted, sincere, and sympathizing friends that ever trod the earth. He was certainly very determined. Whenever he was convinced that a certain course of action was the right one, neither threats nor flatteries could make him to swerve from it. The purity of his intentions and his conduct was above suspicion, but his unbending determination to do what he regarded as his bounden duty made him many enemies.

As a minister of the gospel he excelled most of his brethren in activity and usefulness. When he settled at Llanelly, he found there a church of about two hundred and fifty members, worshipping in an old and very unsightly chapel, burdened with a debt of three hundred pounds. The popularity of the young minister soon attracted multitudes to hear him. In less than a year the old chapel became too small, and a new and a much larger one was built, and opened in May, 1831. In a short time after, the old debt and the cost of the new erection were all paid.

After the opening of the new chapel, Mr. Rees announced that he would conduct an English service at half-past eleven every Sunday morning, for the benefit of the English-speaking inhabitants of the town. The bulk of the Welsh congregation retired at the close of their service, and then the English service immediately commenced. Thus every Sunday morning for six years he preached two sermons before coming down from the pulpit.

In the year 1838 he leased an eligible site in the centre of

the town, and built there a neat chapel for the English. At its opening in June, 1839, he transferred twenty-four members from his church, and among them his own wife, to form the nucleus of an English church in the new chapel. He watched over that first offshoot from the mother church with fatherly care, and was permitted to live to see it grown into a strong, influential, and self-supporting church.

Seeing the population at the seaside increasing rapidly, he built there a large chapel in 1840, and transferred 116 members from the mother church to it. That church soon increased, and was able to support a minister in less than a year after its formation. In 1841 Mr. Rees built a third chapel at Bryn, two miles out of the town, and sent another swarm out of the old hive there. Before his death he had a hand in the formation of a fourth church, near the docks ; and since his death three additional churches have been formed in the town and neighbourhood, all the result of the movement which he set on foot. In 1829 he found only one Congregational church, with 250 members, in the place, and there are now eight, with 2919 members.

As a preacher Mr. Rees stood in the front rank among his popular contemporaries. His sound common sense, his easy and agreeable delivery, and his powerful and remarkably melodious voice made him a most acceptable and effective preacher. We have often seen large congregations overpowered and bathed with tears while listening to him. On one occasion particularly, at an association at Beaufort, Monmouthshire, we have witnessed a sight which we can never forget. At that time that awful pestilence the cholera was making terrible ravages throughout the manufacturing districts of Glamorgan and Monmouth. On the previous day Mr. Rees, on his way to Beaufort, met many funerals, and saw scores of coffins carried through the streets at Merthyr Tydvil and other places, so that his own feelings as well as those of his hearers were unusually solemn. He was preaching the last of three at the ten o'clock service, on the second day of the association, with from ten to fifteen thousand people standing on the field before him. His text was that solemn sentence in Matt. xxiii. 33, "How can

ye escape the damnation of hell?" After delivering, with great power and feeling, for over half an hour many striking thoughts on the dangerous condition of impenitent sinners, the expression of his countenance and his voice suddenly changed, and then he shouted out with almost supernatural power and effect, "IT IS POSSIBLE TO ESCAPE NOW?" Then he repeated the same words in a louder tone, and the third time in a still louder shout, until the whole of the vast multitude had lost all control over their feelings. Hundreds shouted out for joy, and thousands cried out in agony for mercy. Such was David Rees as a preacher.

In addition to his enormous work as a most active and successful pastor of a large church, and a preacher of national fame, Mr. Rees did as much, if not more, than any of his contemporaries to guide and instruct the nation by means of the press. In August, 1835, he started a monthly periodical, which he named *Y Diwygiwr*, i.e., *The Reformer*, and he edited it with extraordinary efficiency for thirty years. Every month it contained able and spirited articles from his busy pen, on civil and religious liberty, of the same character, and of equal ability, as Edward Miall's best articles in *The Nonconformist*. When declining health compelled him, in 1865, to give up the editorship, the public presented him with a testimonial of seven hundred pounds; and with his characteristic generosity and self-denial, instead of appropriating the money to his own use, he handed the whole sum to trustees for establishing a scholarship, chiefly in connection with Brecon College, but open to Congregational students at any college, provided they be natives of South Wales. This generous act, together with all his other good deeds, will transmit his name with honour to future generations.

His life was a most eventful one. Sometimes Providence smiled wonderfully upon him, and at other times he had to pass through the most terrible storms. On the 9th of August, 1851, when he was on a preaching tour in Monmouthshire, two of his sons, aged twelve and eleven years, went to bathe in the tide and were drowned. That sad catastrophe gave such a shock to his strong constitution, from which he never quite re-

covered. His first wife, a most excellent woman, died, after four days' illness, in July, 1857; and his good and only daughter, Mrs. Maybery, died in 1860, aged twenty-six years. Amidst these successions of trials he found in his second wife an estimable, religious, and wealthy lady, all the earthly comforts which he could desire during the last ten years of his life.

In all his varied circumstances he maintained a consistent Christian character. In his prosperity he was cheerful and thankful, and diligently serving his Divine Master; and in his adversity resigned, quiet, and devotional. He now rests from all his labours and troubles, and enjoys the reward of a good and faithful servant. His memoirs and a selection from his writings, by the late Rev. Thomas Davies of Llandilo, is a very valuable and instructive work.

DAVID HOWELLS,

An eminent minister in the Calvinistic Methodist Connexion, was born near St. Clears, Caermarthenshire, March 31, 1797. His parents were eminently religious, and he was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord from his infancy. Before he was nine years of age, in the year 1805, he was admitted to the communion of the church of which his parents were members. Mr. Charles, of Bala, was officiating on the day of his admission, and it is said that he took up the child in his arms before the congregation, and solemnly dedicated him to the service of the Lord. He commenced preaching in the year 1815. Then, or soon after, he settled at Swansea, where he married. In the year 1821 he was sent by the South Wales Association to Penybont, near Llandrindod Wells, Radnorshire, as a home missionary. He laboured successfully there for six or seven years. The year after his settlement there he built a chapel, gathered a congregation, and soon after formed a Christian Society, which has long since become a comparatively strong and self-supporting church. Owing to his success as a home missionary, the Association ordained him in 1824, at an earlier age than the preachers were then generally ordained. On leaving Radnorshire he returned to Swansea, where he made his home till the close of his life, with the exception of a

year or two, when he resided at Llantwice Major as superintendent of the Methodist societies in the Vale of Glamorgan. He died at Swansea, August 4, 1873, after a short illness. He continued to preach with his usual animation and vigour until within three or four weeks of his death.

Mr. Howells occupied a very high and influential position in his own denomination, and was highly esteemed by people of all other denominations who were capable of appreciating the character of a holy and devoted man of God. He was a sound evangelical preacher, always acceptable and often very effective. He could preach with correctness and freedom in the English language as well as in the Welsh. For several years before his death he was the senior minister in the Calvinistic Methodist body. After signally serving his generation as an able and diligent preacher of the gospel for fifty-eight years, this good man descended to his grave without a spot on his character, and in favour with God and men.

WILLIAM AMBROSE.

This eminent minister was born at Bangor, August 1, 1813. He was the only child of his parents, who were religious people, in comfortable and respectable circumstances. He was for several years a scholar at the Friars' School in his native city, and afterwards for some time under the tuition of the Rev. W. Griffith, at Holyhead. In the year 1828, when he was fifteen years of age, he was apprenticed to a draper in Liverpool. He was a regular attendant at the Tabernacle during the years he lived at Liverpool, and on the 8th of July, 1830, he was admitted to the communion of the church there. The pastor, Mr. Breese, and the deacons soon found out that he was a young man of superior talent and earnest piety. It was their intention to encourage him to preach, but before the matter was formally laid before him he removed to London, and had a letter of transfer to the Welsh church in Southwark. Soon after he commenced preaching there. During the two years he stayed in London he was almost every Sabbath engaged to preach in one or the other of the Welsh chapels. His service was sought for by the Welsh people of all denomi-

nations. In August, 1836, he left London for Bangor, intending, after remaining for a few weeks with his parents, to set up business on his own account in Liverpool. At Bangor he met Mr. Caledfryn Williams, who persuaded him to accompany him on a preaching tour through Lleyn and Eifionydd. They started in the month of October, and preached twice a day for a fortnight. On their journey they accidentally met the venerable Christmas Evans. Mr. Williams introduced his young companion to Mr. Evans, and told him, "This young man intends setting up in business at Liverpool, but I have done my best to persuade him to devote his life to the work of the Christian ministry; he is eminently qualified for it." The venerable patriarch turned to the young man, after hearing Mr. Williams' statement, and advised him "with the authority of an oracle," and his words led him to a decision at once.

When the itinerants visited Portmadoc, the people there were charmed by Mr. Ambrose's personal appearance and preaching, and pressed him to supply their pulpit for a Sabbath. He consented. After hearing him the second time they expressed their desire to ordain him at once; but he wisely told them that he preferred remaining with them for twelve months on probation, in order to see whether he would suit the place, and the place suit him. They accepted his proposal. The members of the church were only nineteen, but before the end of the twelve months' probation both the church and the congregation were more than doubled. He was ordained December 7, 1837, and laboured there with extraordinary success for thirty-seven years. The mother church, some years before his death, consisted of more than four hundred members, exclusive of large numbers he transferred, from time to time, to form branch churches in the surrounding districts.

After serving his generation with remarkable faithfulness and efficiency, and enjoying good health all his life, on the first day of January, 1871, as he was preparing to go to the evening service, he had a sudden paralytic stroke, which disabled him for over seven months. He gradually recovered, so as to be able before the end of the summer to resume his

delightful work of preaching the gospel. But he never became what he was before. He continued to preach and discharge his pastoral duties, to the great satisfaction of his attached flock, from the summer of 1871 to April 27, 1873. On that Sabbath day he preached with unusual effect : in the morning from the words, " Patient in tribulation ;" and in the evening from Isaiah lvii. 15, " The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity." After the evening sermon he administered the Lord's Supper ; and while going out of the chapel he had a second, and a much severer, stroke. He had to be carried home, and he never uttered a word from that day to the 31st of October following, when he gently breathed out his last breath. His funeral was the largest ever seen in that part of the Principality.

William Ambrose was tall, comely, and of a very gentlemanly and commanding personal appearance ; and his comely outward man was the habitation of a great soul, remarkably well proportioned in all its faculties. He was one of the completest and most faultless men, body and soul, we ever knew. His character, like his physical and mental constitution, was everything which could be desired or expected. Providence, by means of his parents and his excellent wife, had placed him in affluent circumstances ; yet he was humble, sociable, and unpretending. He had one of the most comfortable homes in Wales, but instead of lounging there in idleness, he was nearly half his time about the country on errands of mercy, either collecting to help poor congregations to pay their chapel debts, preaching in neglected districts, advocating the claims of the Bible and the Missionary Societies, or assisting in different ways his poorer brethren in the ministry. He was often, on his journeys in poor neighbourhoods, very indifferently entertained, but he never complained, and never got tired of going about doing good. He was a most unselfish person. He would submit to any reasonable personal inconvenience in order to do good to other people. His decision to give up the lucrative trade to which he had been trained, by which he might have become a millionaire before the close of his life, and to accept the call of a church of nineteen members, in what was then a

small obscure village, plainly shows the unselfish character of the man. A few years before his death, while walking with a friend in one of the streets of London, he looked at a magnificent pile of buildings belonging to one of the wealthy city merchants, and said, "I had as good a chance of possessing that as he. Years ago we were fellow-assistants in a city establishment, and then my prospects were the brighter of the two ; but I don't envy him. I am not sorry for the course I have taken, and, through God's help, I would do the same again."

As a preacher he was remarkably edifying. His pithy sentences, his striking illustrations, and burning thoughts riveted the attention of his hearers. No attentive hearer could listen to him without being wiser and better. His taste was most refined, and his language always chaste, simple, and elegant. His voice was clear, agreeable to the ear, and somewhat melodious ; and his delivery was unrestrained and natural, neither too rapid nor too slow.

Mr. Ambrose was a very accomplished man in every respect. He was a poet of the first order, and a most racy and instructive prose writer. His numerous articles in the *Dysgedydd*, of which he was one of the editors for nearly twenty years, are among the most readable compositions in the Welsh language. As a citizen, a literary character, and a minister of the gospel, he was respected and honoured by the rich and the poor. William Ambrose was one of the most precious gifts of God to Wales in the present generation.

His biography, and a selection from his prose and poetical works, under the editorship of the Rev. Dr. W. Rees, Chester, were lately published in two handsome volumes.

JOHN PARRY, D.D.,

Was born March 23, 1812, at Bersham, a small village near Wrexham. His parents were devoted members of the Calvinistic Methodist Connexion. He was the only son of his parents. In his early childhood he attended a day-school at Wrexham, and when he was twelve years of age the family removed to Manchester. The circumstances of his parents

would not permit them to keep him long at school there ; but he, by his insatiable thirst for knowledge, overcame that disadvantage by attending, for years, evening classes and lectures at the Mechanics' Institute. By those means he became a respectable scholar, and acquired a vast amount of general knowledge ; and by his regular attendance at the Calvinistic Methodist Sunday-school, and other religious services, he attained such proficiency in Biblical and religious knowledge that he was generally regarded as the ablest man among the Welsh in Manchester. All who were capable of appreciating his ardent piety and brilliant talents considered that he ought to have devoted himself to the work of the Christian ministry years before he consented to do it. Owing to certain circumstances he did not see his way clear to commence preaching until some time after his admission to the Connexional College at Bala. He began his studies there in the year 1838, and prosecuted them with the utmost diligence and application for three years. In October, 1841, he, with his friends Mr. Owen Thomas (now Dr. O. Thomas, of Liverpool) and Mr. Morgan Lloyd, the present member for the Anglesea Boroughs, entered the university of Edinburgh, and attended there for two sessions. In 1843 Dr. Charles, one of the tutors at Bala, was appointed president of the college at Trevecca, and Mr. Parry was chosen to succeed him at Bala. He discharged his duties as tutor with singular ability and faithfulness to the close of his remarkably active and useful life. His health had been gradually failing for years, but amidst all his pain and weakness he performed his professional work with constant diligence and efficiency to the last. He died in peace, January 19, 1874, in the sixty-first year of his age.

Dr. Parry was a very talented man, an excellent scholar, a tutor of the first class, a most acceptable and edifying preacher, and a very able writer. He contributed many articles of superior value to the Welsh periodicals ; but the work which immortalizes his name is the *Encyclopædia Cambrensis*, in ten large volumes, the only encyclopædia in the Welsh language. He edited eight volumes of the ten, but he was called to his reward before the work was completed. It

is a work of sterling value, and evinces the accurate scholarship, the extensive knowledge, the sound judgment, and the refined taste of its able editor.

DAVID WILLIAMS,

A very extraordinary character, and possibly at the time of his death the oldest minister in the whole of Christendom. He was born at Llanwrtyd, Breconshire, January 27, 1779. His parents were zealous members of the ancient Congregational church in that parish, and he was admitted to full membership in that church a few months after passing his eleventh birthday. In early youth he was apprenticed to a shoemaker. After serving his apprenticeship he went to Llandovery, and afterwards to Merthyr Tydvil, to work at his trade. Different to too many young men, he carried his religion with him wherever he went. About the beginning of the year 1799 he returned home, and in the following September, at the request of his pastor, the Rev. Isaac Price, and the church, he began to preach, and it was soon found that he was, in every respect, endowed with an extraordinary qualification for the work. In the year 1800 he accompanied Mr. Daniel Evans, afterwards of Mynyddbach, near Swansea, on a preaching tour through North Wales. Some time after his return from that journey he applied for admission to the academy at Wrexham (now Brecon College), and his application was accepted. But his aged pastor implored him with tears to stay at home to be his assistant, and he reluctantly consented, but deeply regretted it in after years. His superior abilities and unwearied application in a great measure made up for the want of collegiate training; but from experience of the disadvantages he had to work his way through, he always strongly advised every young preacher to seek admission to a college before entering the ministry.

Mr. Williams accepted the unanimous invitation of the united churches of Llanwrtyd and Troedriwdalar, and was ordained August 18, 1803. About that time Mr. Price, the senior pastor, had a paralytic stroke which utterly disabled him, and so the whole work at once fell upon the shoulders

of the junior pastor, and he bore the burden unweariedly for sixty-three years ! In 1805 he formed those members of the church at Troedrhiwdalar who resided on the south side of the Eppynt Hills into a branch church, in the parish of Merthyr Cynog, and built them a chapel, which he named Ebenezer. That church, in connection with the other churches, was under his pastoral care for thirty years. In 1813 he built a chapel named Bethel, midway between Llanwrtyd and Llandoverly, and formed the members of the church at Llanwrtyd who resided in that district into a branch church there. Another offshoot from Llanwrtyd was formed into a church at Aber-gwesin, and a chapel was built there in 1828. In 1822 a chapel named Beulah was built within three miles to the west of Troedrhiwdalar, and a church was formed there, which is now nearly as strong as the mother church. In 1847 another branch of the church at Troedrhiwdalar was formed at a new chapel named Olewydd, near the road from Llanwrtyd to Builth. Before the formation of these branch churches, many of the members had to walk or ride eight or ten miles, over rough and mountainous roads, to their places of worship. Having so many churches under his pastoral superintendence, Mr. Williams, an unwearied worker as he was, felt that it was too much for him ; he therefore resigned his charge at Llanwrtyd and its branches in 1843, and confined his labours to Troedrhiwdalar and its branches.

In 1853 his jubilee was celebrated. Hundreds of ministers and laymen from various parts of the Principality gathered there on that interesting occasion. The worthy veteran was presented with a handsome testimonial. His senior deacon, in making the presentation, said : " In fifty years there are two thousand six hundred Sundays, and our worthy and esteemed pastor has not been disabled on a single Sunday in the fifty years from preaching by indisposition, or allowed flooded, bridgeless mountain-streams, storms of rain, or roads thickly covered by snow-drifts and almost impassable, to interfere with the fulfilment of his Sabbath engagements." He invariably came home after the evening service from the furthest corner of his field of labour, ready for his work on the morrow, when

he rose again with the lark. During the first forty years of his ministry he preached three times and travelled twenty miles every Sunday. He formally resigned his charge at Troedrhwdalar on the day of the ordination of his successor, and the sixty-third anniversary of his pastorate over that and other churches in the district. After that he continued to preach every Sunday to the close of his wonderful life. In May, 1874, he travelled to London on Saturday, preached there three times on Sunday and twice on Monday, and reached home in good spirits on Tuesday evening. On the following Saturday he started for Pembrokeshire, preached five times on Sunday and Monday, and returned on Tuesday. On the last Sunday, save one, before his death, he preached twice at Bulth, and rode fifteen miles. The day before his departure he complained of some pain between his shoulders, but he felt better in the afternoon, and walked about. On the morning of his last day he expected to be able to go to the chapel in the evening, to hear two of his particular friends, who were to preach there; but about midday he felt worse, and at three o'clock, in a fit of coughing, he suddenly breathed his last. That memorable day was the 20th of August, 1874.

Mr. Williams was physically strong, and rather short of stature. He was naturally a very fluent speaker, and possessed a fine voice which was entirely under control. He was universally acknowledged to be one of the most eloquent and able preachers in Wales, and mighty was the influence he wielded over vast congregations, even in the open air. He was one of those who created a new era in the preaching of Wales by giving a popular phase to the great doctrines of Christianity. So great a favourite was he in Wales, that at almost every Association, when the meetings are held in the open air, in both South and North Wales, his services were sought, and to him was assigned the most prominent position on such occasions. He was young and buoyant between ninety and ninety-five. To the last he kept himself abreast of the age, and was a constant student of contemporary history. He died in the ninety-sixth year of his age, and still had his armour on, glittering and unbuckled, having been a church member for

eighty-four years, a preacher of the gospel for seventy-five, an ordained minister for seventy-one, and the stated pastor of the same church for sixty-three.

His married life lasted for sixty-one years, and the coffin of his wife was the first to cross his threshold. After reaching the house from the funeral of his wife, he said, "I have seen my grave to-day, but having seen Calvary long ago I am not afraid of it." Mr. Williams's biography, by his successor, the Rev. D. A. Griffiths, is a very interesting volume, and a translation of it would be a boon to English readers.

JOHN PRICHARD, D.D.,

A very eminent, active, and successful Baptist minister, was born at Llaneilian, Anglesea, March 25, 1796. When he was young his parents removed to Holywell, and afterwards to Llandudno, where his father worked in the mines. Owing to his father's habitual intemperance he had no educational advantages in his childhood. When he was about ten years of age, the Calvinistic Methodists opened a Sunday-school at Llandudno, and he became one of the scholars at once. There he learnt to read his Bible, and acquired some measure of religious knowledge. About the year 1810 the owners of the mines opened an English day-school at Llandudno, and John Prichard, who was then working with his father in the mines, attended it for some time, generally in the afternoons, after working underground in the mornings. He acquired some knowledge of the English language there. He was afterwards at a school kept by the Rev. Jesse Jones, a Baptist minister, at Fforddlas, near Conway, for nine months; and for a few months more, in 1813, at the school of a Mr. Anderson, a Unitarian minister at Liverpool. The money he had saved by working in the mines supported him at these schools. It is said that he worked again in the mines for some time after his return from Liverpool.

Though his father, by neither word nor example, led him to think anything of religion, yet it seems that he had been the subject of religious convictions from his early childhood. Those convictions were gradually deepened by what he had

learnt in the Sunday-school, and in hearing sermons. At last he made up his mind to make a public profession of religion. He felt inclined at first to join the Calvinistic Methodists, but he was ultimately led to prefer the Baptists. He was baptized in the sea at Llandudno, in June, 1816, by the Rev. Thomas Rees Davies. About two years after he commenced preaching, and in 1821 he was admitted to the Baptist Academy at Aber-gavenny. On the completion of his course there, which then, at that institution, lasted only for two years, he returned home in a very delicate state of health. When he recovered he visited Llangollen, and received an invitation from the church there. That church, which consisted of only thirty-two members, mostly poor people, with their chapel under a heavy burden of debt, had nothing in itself or surroundings encouraging to a young man to accept its invitation. However, Mr. Prichard made up his mind to accept it, and he was ordained there December 25, 1823. The salary which they could promise him was only twenty-two pounds a year. He began his work under very discouraging circumstances, but with earnestness, determination, and unswerving trust in God. Year after year he gradually gained ground, and many years before he finished his illustrious course he was one of the most influential men in the whole town and neighbourhood, and the Baptist church strong and flourishing. In the year 1856 he formed an English church, and soon after a new chapel was erected for the Welsh church, while the English congregation occupied the old one.

When the North Wales Baptist College was instituted at Llangollen, in 1862, Dr. Prichard was chosen to be the president and theological tutor. He discharged his important duties with remarkable efficiency for four years, and then, feeling that the weakness of old age was becoming oppressive, he resigned, and Dr. Jones, the classical tutor, was appointed to succeed him. He gave a freehold site for a college house in 1872, and in the year 1874 a testimonial of four hundred pounds was presented to him, which he gave to found a scholarship in connection with the college.

Dr. Prichard was an eminently devout man. He lived in

close and constant communion with God. A professor of religion, and especially a preacher, of doubtful morality, or deficient in the sobriety and seriousness which become the gospel, was unbearable to him. His zeal for purity and becoming solemnity might occasionally lead him to treat suspected characters with rather too much roughness; but his aim was always good, if he sometimes used improper means for attaining it.

He was a very active and public-spirited man. All public movements for the advancement of religion, morality, education, and civil and religious liberty, had his valuable and heartiest support. In his own sphere he always took the lead in such movements.

He was a sound divine, and a very edifying evangelical preacher. His tall, handsome, dignified and solemn appearance in the pulpit inspired a feeling of reverence towards him and his message in the hearers. He was not ranked among the most popular preachers of his age, but those who frequently heard him admired his sound sense, and his telling and clear manner of explaining the expressions and the doctrines of God's word. He was a blessing to his own denomination, and, to a great extent, to the country at large. He descended to the grave in a ripe old age, and full of honour. His Memoirs, by the Rev. Owen Davies, Caernarvon, is a very interesting and well-written volume.

ISAAC JENKINS,

A very estimable and useful Wesleyan minister, was born at Ystumtuen, near Aberystwyth, in the year 1812. "His father was a very devout and heavenly-minded man; so in his childhood and youth he was brought under powerful religious influences, and at a very early period gave himself fully to the Lord. After labouring with zeal and success as a local preacher, he was accepted as a candidate for the ministry in the year 1835. He was one of the first students admitted to the Theological Institution at Hoxton; and after spending two years there, he entered upon Circuit work. Early in his course he gave evidence of considerable administrative ability, and

for twenty-three years faithfully served the Connexion as the Financial Secretary of a District. For several years he was the chairman of the South Wales District, and discharged the duties of that office with wisdom and fidelity. In the year 1874 his health failed, and he was compelled to retire from the full work of the ministry, but continued to labour in the Master's vineyard, as his strength permitted. He was very amiable and affectionate, and loved by all who knew him.

As a preacher, his style was simple and chaste; the arrangement of his discourses was natural and perspicuous, and the delivery of them was often accompanied with great power. He was an able expositor of God's Holy Word, and a useful minister of the New Testament. Nor did he confine himself to pulpit labours and pastoral duties. He sought by his pen to contribute to the instruction and spiritual welfare of our young people. He finished his earthly course in perfect peace with God and men, and left a clear testimony that to him to die was gain. Some of his last words were, "My soul is safe resting on the all-sufficient atonement of my blessed Redeemer." With considerable difficulty he whispered, "Inform my dear friends that I have deep, solid, and undisturbed peace." He died at Merthyr Tydvil, August 25, 1877, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the forty-third of his ministry.¹

The foregoing sketch is perfectly correct. A more amiable, kindhearted, sincere, and inoffensive man than Isaac Jenkins never lived.

THOMAS THOMAS, D.D.

This eminent minister was born at Cowbridge, Glamorganshire, January 12, 1804. In his infancy his parents removed to Leckwith Bridge, near Cardiff. His father was a farmer in comfortable circumstances. The son received the rudiments of his education at a school kept by a clergyman at Llandaff. Although he had no religious training or example at home, he was at an early age, by frequently conversing with two pious labourers who were working on his father's farm, induced to attend often the meetings of a small company of Welsh Baptists,

¹ The Minutes of Conference for 1878, p. 18.

who worshipped in a room at the Star and Garter, near Cardiff Castle. When about thirteen years of age he applied for admission to the Baptist Church, but owing to the opposition of his parents his admission was delayed for some time. However, it was not long before they gave their consent, and he was baptized by the Rev. Griffith David, and admitted to the church at the Tabernacle Chapel, Cardiff. When about sixteen years of age he began to preach, and delivered his first public sermon at the Tabernacle, April 12, 1821. He soon became very popular, and he was constantly invited to preach in farmhouses and cottages in almost every village from Cardiff to Lantwit Major. In 1822 he was admitted to the Baptist College at Abergavenny, and in August, 1824, he was transferred from there to Stepney College, London, where he studied for four years. Having become known, while a student, for his earnestness and ability as a preacher, he was invited, on leaving college, to the pastorate of the church at Henrietta Street, London. There he laboured with remarkable success between seven and eight years. Among the members of his church there was Lord Justice Lush, who remained to the close of his life one of his most intimate friends.

When the Baptist College was removed from Abergavenny to Pontypool, in 1836, Dr. Thomas was invited to become its president. He accepted the invitation, and presided over that institution with great efficiency and universal approbation for forty-one years. His resignation, which his failing health and increasing infirmity of deafness induced him to tender, took place in 1877. That his successful management of the college, and his indefatigable ministerial labours, were heartily appreciated throughout the Principality, was evidenced by the handsome testimonial, consisting of a beautifully-illuminated address, and a purse of two thousand guineas, which was presented to him on the 20th of September, 1876, at a public meeting held at Cardiff, and presided over by Sir Robert Lush.

On leaving Pontypool he took up his residence at Cardiff. Though advanced in years he continued to serve his Divine Master to the very close of his industrious life. He occupied some pulpit or other almost every Sunday during the short time

he resided at Cardiff, and the last Sabbath he lived he preached twice at Pontypridd. On Monday, December 5, 1881, he returned home in his usual health, and Tuesday he was as lively and cheerful as ever. That evening, after conducting family worship, he retired to his study, and wrote a few remarks with pencil on the Revised Version of the New Testament, and then went to bed. The following morning, not getting up at the usual time, his niece went to his bedroom, and found him dead in bed. A medical man was sent for at once, who said that life had been extinct for about half an hour, and that the cause of death was apoplexy. Thus this eminent servant of God passed quietly to his eternal rest, after more than half a century of singular activity and usefulness in the work of the Christian ministry.

Dr. Thomas was one of the most perfect specimens of a Christian gentleman we ever had the privilege of knowing and associating with. He was amiable, sociable, and perfectly free from narrowness and bigotry, though an unswerving Liberal and a staunch Nonconformist.

Our limited space will not permit us to do much more than merely refer to the names of a few other worthies who finished their course within the last twenty-one years.

ELLIS EVANS, D.D.—He was a very eminent Baptist minister at Cefnmawr, Denbighshire, and was regarded as one of the ablest divines among the Welsh Baptists. Born at Llanuwchllyn, June 22, 1786; was an ordained minister for forty-nine years, and died at Cefnmawr, March 28, 1864.

EDWARD MORGAN, of Dyffryn, Merionethshire, a bright ornament of the Welsh pulpit, and one of the most active and useful ministers in the Calvinistic Methodist body. He died May 9, 1871, in the fifty-third year of his age.

JOHN DAVIES, of Cardiff, was a most active and a singularly successful minister. His death at the early age of fifty-two was a great loss to the Congregationalists of Wales. He died May 8, 1874. His "Memoirs," by Dr. J. Thomas, of Liverpool, is to be published forthwith.

WILLIAM DAVIES, D.D., was an eminent Wesleyan minister.

He was a sweet and a very popular preacher. For some years he was editor of the *Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, and was also author of a theological dictionary and several pamphlets in the Welsh language. He died at Bangor, August 13, 1875, aged fifty-five years.

DANIEL DAVIES, D.D.—This most extraordinary man was born near Llandovery, Caermarthenshire, November 15, 1797. His parents were very pious people, members of the Calvinistic Methodist Connexion, and he in his early youth joined the church of which his parents were members. In 1818 he commenced preaching, and in 1821 he changed his views on baptism, and consequently joined the Baptists. The small-pox deprived him of his eyesight when he was six years and four months old, but through his superior mental powers, and flowing eloquence, he became a most powerful and popular preacher, and his popularity continued undiminished to the close of his long life. He died February 19, 1876, and was buried in the burying-ground of Bethesda Chapel, Swansea, where he had been minister for twenty-nine years.

JOHN JONES (Mathetes) was born at Newcastle-Emlyn in the year 1821. He was educated at the Baptist College, Haverfordwest, and became one of the most celebrated Baptist ministers in the Principality. He published a considerable number of works, but his principal one is his "Biblical and Theological Dictionary," in three volumes. He was a straightforward and honest man of an unblemished character. He died at Briton Ferry, November 18, 1878, aged fifty-seven.

WILLIAM GRIFFITH, of Holyhead, was the second son of the Rev. John Griffith of Caernarvon. He was born August 12, 1801, and was admitted to the church in his fourteenth year. On the day when the battle of Waterloo was fought he enlisted under the banner of the Prince of Peace. He was educated at Caermarthen College, and ordained in 1822 at Holyhead, over a small church of poor people, worshipping in a room. There he spent his whole life, and left three churches of over six hundred members in the town and neighbourhood. We never saw a nearer approach to perfection in everything lovely, gentlemanly, and pure, than we saw in the amiable William Griffith. He died in the Lord, August 13, 1881.

The last, but not the least, we can include in our list of worthy characters is THOMAS JONES. He was born at Rhaia-der, in Radnorshire, July 17, 1819, and died at Swansea, June 24, 1882. His fame, as one of the most popular preachers of the age, has spread over both hemispheres. It is fully expected that his sons and nephew will soon publish a full account of his wonderful life, and we predict that it will be one of the most instructive and readable volumes of biography ever published.





CHAPTER VIII.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE COLLEGES OF THE WELSH NON-CONFORMISTS, FROM A.D. 1662 TO THE PRESENT TIME.

THE Independents and Presbyterians, from the earliest period of their history, have always been zealous for a well educated ministry. Some of them, in the early part of the eighteenth century, have suffered their zeal to carry them to the absurd extreme of making it a condition in the trust-deeds of their chapels, that none but persons regularly trained at an Academy should be eligible to officiate as ministers in those chapels.

The first Nonconforming Academy in Wales was that at Brynllwarch, near Bridgend, Glamorganshire. Its founder and first president was Samuel Jones, A.M., who had been for some time tutor at Jesus College, Oxford. It appears that he set up his seminary soon after his ejection in 1662. He presided over it with remarkable efficiency to the close of his valuable life in 1697. On his death, it was removed to Abergavenny, and placed under the presidency of a Mr. Roger Griffyth. That person, in the course of two or three years, deserted the ranks of Nonconformity, "and became parson of New Radnor, and Archdeacon of Brecon, by the favour and interest of R. Harley, Esq., and not long after died miserably in debt there, to say no more."¹ Mr. Samuel Jones, of Tewkesbury, and Mr. Thomas Perrot, of Caermarthen, studied for some time under Mr. Griffyth.

When the tutor at Abergavenny conformed, the academy

¹ Calamy, vol. ii. 734.

was removed again to the neighbourhood of Bridgend, and Mr. Rees Price, the father of the celebrated Dr. Richard Price, of London, presided over it for a few years. Mr. Price, who had been educated under Mr. Jones, of Brynllwarch, was a good scholar and a very successful minister. In doctrine he was a rigid Calvinist. He died, June 28, 1739, aged 66 years. It seems that he considered the ministry as the great work of his life, and only undertook the care of the academy until a suitable tutor could be found. In the year 1704, the institution was located at Caermarthen, under the care of Mr. William Evans, who conducted it with great reputation till his death, in December, 1718. He was succeeded by Mr. Thomas Perrot, of Newmarket, Flintshire. Mr. Perrot was a native of Llanybree, near Caermarthen, and studied successfully under Mr. Griffyth, at Abergavenny, and Mr. James Owen, at Shrewsbury. He was ordained August 6, 1706, by Mr. Matthew Henry, and others, to the pastoral office at Newmarket, where he continued to exercise his ministry till his removal to Caermarthen. He died December 26, 1733. Mr. Perrot was a very good man, but too mild and good-natured to exercise proper discipline over the students, many of whom, in the latter years of his life, became notoriously loose in their morals, and Arminian in their sentiments. Most of the clergy of the diocese of St. David's, as well as the Nonconforming ministers, were educated under Mr. Perrot, and his successors, at Caermarthen. The corruption of the Nonconforming students may, to some extent, be attributed to the contaminating influence of their clerical schoolmates, who generally made no pretensions to personal piety.

Mr. Vavasor Griffiths, of Maesgwyn, in Radnorshire, was appointed to succeed Mr. Perrot. He refused to remove to Caermarthen, lest his pupils should be corrupted, like those under his predecessor; the institution was consequently removed to Radnorshire. He presided over it till the year 1740, when he died, in the forty-third year of his age. Mr. Griffiths was a man of eminent piety, and a most excellent tutor. He had been educated under Mr. Jones, of Tewkesbury.

After Mr. Griffiths's death the academy was removed to Haverfordwest, and placed under the superintendence of Mr. Evan Davies, the Independent minister there. He commenced his work as tutor in the autumn of 1740. In 1743 he accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the churches at Llanybree and Bwlchnewydd, near Caermarthen, and set up the academy again in that town. Mr. Samuel Thomas, minister of the Presbyterian church at Lammas Street, had a flourishing Grammar School under his care there, which was then amalgamated with the Academy. Mr. Davies retained the presidency and the theological chair, and Mr. Thomas undertook the classical department. The London Congregational and Presbyterian Fund Boards annually voted certain sums of money to support the tutors and the students, since the days of Mr. Samuel Jones. Finding that Mr. Samuel Thomas, the classical tutor, was an avowed Pelagian, if not an Arian, the Congregational Fund Board adopted the following resolution :—" March 5, 1753. That this Board insist upon Mr. Davies's removal of the Academy from *Caermarthen*." ¹ Mr. Davies, though strictly orthodox himself, was, for some reason or other, unwilling to part with his colleague. The Congregational Board discontinued their grants altogether on the 3rd of February, 1755. In that year they established an orthodox Independent Academy at Abergavenny, and left the one at Caermarthen entirely in the hands of the Presbyterian Board. Mr. Evan Davies held his office of president for three years longer; but finding himself deserted by his orthodox friends, he resigned in 1758, and took the charge of a church at Billericay, Essex, where he died, October 16, 1770, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

On Mr. Davies's resignation, Mr. S. Thomas became the president, and Dr. Jenkin Jenkins, of Llanfyllin, succeeded him as classical tutor. From the time of Mr. Thomas's death, in 1766, Dr. Jenkins was the sole tutor, till he resigned in 1779, and settled in London. Dr. Jenkins was a professed Arian. Both Mr. Thomas and Dr. Jenkins were excellent

¹ *Caernarvon* is the word in the original manuscript, but it was evidently the mistake of the secretary.

scholars. They sent out, from 1759 to 1779, a considerable number of thoroughly educated young men, but only four or five of the whole number settled as pastors over orthodox Welsh churches. The great majority settled with Arian congregations in England, and several entered on secular professions. It is said that the want of that seriousness and religious feeling which characterised former generations of students prevailed to a lamentable degree among the Caermarthen students at this time. The celebrated David Davies, of Castellhowell, complains that he had lost most of his serious impressions during his time at the academy.

Dr. Jenkins was succeeded by Mr. Robert Gentleman, who had Mr. Benjamin Davies, of Cardiganshire, for his assistant. On Mr. Gentleman's removal to Kidderminster in 1784, Mr. Solomon Harries, minister of the Arian congregation at Swansea, was appointed president of the institution, and it was removed from Caermarthen to that town. Mr. Harries, who died the following year, was succeeded in the church and the Academy by Mr. W. Howell, of Chilwood, near Bristol. On the death of Mr. T. Lloyd, the assistant tutor, in 1789, Mr. David Peter, one of the senior students, was appointed in his stead. Mr. Peter resigned in 1792 to take the charge of the church at Lammas Street, Caermarthen, and was succeeded by John Jones, LL.D.; but some difference arising in the Academy, it was dissolved in 1794. In the following year it was re-established at Caermarthen, when Mr. Peter was appointed president, and Mr. D. Davies, the Independent minister at Llanybree, classical tutor. Mr. Davies's connection with the institution ceased in 1813, when Mr. D. L. Jones, A.M., a Unitarian, succeeded him. Mr. Jones died in 1830, and Mr. Peter in 1837.

Dr. David Lloyd succeeded Mr. D. L. Jones, and after Mr. Peter's death was principal of the college to the time of his death. He was a kind and genial person, a good scholar, and an efficient teacher. He had his diplomas of M.A. and LL.D. at the University of Glasgow. His death occurred September 13, 1863, when he was fifty-eight years of age. Mr. Peter was succeeded in the theological chair by Mr.

David Davies, of Pantteg, a Congregational minister, and he occupied it until the end of the year 1856, when he resigned. Dr. Thomas Nicholas, of Hereford, succeeded him in 1857, and resigned in 1862. Mr. W. Morgan, Congregational minister, Caermarthen, has worthily filled the chair from 1862 to the present time. In 1854 a third tutor was appointed, and Dr. Samuel C. Davison had the appointment, as Hebrew, German, and English tutor. He retired in 1858, and died in London in 1872. In 1855 Dr. William Davies, of Ffrwdvale, was appointed mathematical tutor, which appointment he held till he died in December, 1859. Mr. S. Hunter succeeded him in 1860, and was both Hebrew and mathematical tutor. He was principal of the college from the time of Dr. Lloyd's death to the time of his own death, which took place November 6, 1875. His students speak very highly of him as a great and a very devout man. Mr. D. L. Evans was appointed Hebrew and mathematical tutor in 1864, and retired in June, 1874. The students had a very high opinion of his learning. Mr. Evans was succeeded by Mr. D. E. Jones, M.A., a Congregational minister, and he occupies the position to this time. Dr. G. Vance Smith has been the principal and tutor in Greek, Hebrew, &c., since 1876. Mr. E. Higginson, of Swansea, delivered weekly lectures on English literature to the students, from 1869 to 1875. The present number of students is thirty, of whom twenty-three are Congregationalists.

Members of all Dissenting denominations are eligible for admission as students, but full two-thirds of the young men educated at this institution, from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the present day, were members of Independent churches, except during the tutorship of Dr. Jenkins, when the Independents almost entirely deserted it.¹

THE INDEPENDENT ACADEMY AT ABERGAVENNY.

This institution, as we have already stated, was established in 1755. Mr. David Jardine, the pastor of the Independent

¹ "Hanes Crefydd yn Nghymru gan Peter," pp. 682-686. Edmund Jones, Walter Wilson, Josiah Thompson, and Thomas Morgan's MSS.

church at Abergavenny, was appointed tutor. Mr. D. Jardine was the son of Mr. James Jardine, Presbyterian minister at Denbigh. His mother was the daughter of Mr. Thomas Baddy, of the same place. He had been educated at Caermarthen under Messrs. Davies and Thomas. Though very young when he was appointed president of the new seminary, he proved a most efficient tutor; but death soon terminated his useful career. He was removed to a better world, after a very short illness, October 1, 1766, at the early age of 34 years. One of the last sentences which fell from his lips was—"Let me rest my head upon thy dear bosom for ever, O my sweet Jesus, my great Redeemer."

Mr. Jardine was succeeded by his assistant, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Benjamin Davies. Dr. Davies was well qualified by learning, piety, and prudence for his important office. He was the son of Mr. Rees Davies, minister of the Congregational church at Penygraig, Caermarthenshire, and had been educated at Caermarthen. In 1782 Dr. Davies was appointed to succeed Dr. Fisher at the Old College, Homerton; and Dr. Edward Williams, then of Oswestry, who had been educated at Abergavenny, was chosen to succeed him as president of the Welsh Academy, which was then transferred from Abergavenny to Oswestry. Dr. Williams resigned his pastoral charge and tutorship in 1791, and removed to Birmingham. The Academy was then placed under the care of Mr. Jenkin Lewis, at Wrexham. He most ably presided over it for twenty years. Mr. Lewis was born at Brithdir, in the parish of Gellygaer, Glamorganshire, August 12, 1760. He was educated under Dr. Davies at Abergavenny, and for some time assisted Dr. Williams, as sub-tutor, at Oswestry. In November, 1783, he was ordained to the pastoral office at Wrexham, from which place he removed in 1811, to preside over a newly established seminary at Manchester. In 1815 he accepted an invitation from the church at Hope Chapel, Newport, Monmouthshire, where he happily and usefully spent the remaining years of his life. He died in the Lord, August 11, 1831. A few months previously to his death, he received a diploma of D.D. from one of the American Universities, but he declined using it.

Jenkin Lewis was one of the best of men—loved and respected by all who knew him.

Mr. Jenkin Lewis was succeeded in the church and the academy at Wrexham by Dr. George Lewis. In 1816 Dr. Lewis removed from Wrexham to Llanfyllin, in Montgomeryshire, and the board in London consented to transfer the academy there with him. In 1821 it was thought advisable to remove it from Llanfyllin to Newtown, in the same county. Dr. Lewis died within nine months after his removal to Newtown.

Dr. George Lewis was born in the parish of Trelech, Caermarthenshire, in 1763, and was educated under Mr. R. Gentleman, at Caermarthen. He had been remarkably useful and successful in the ministry, first at Caernarvon, and afterwards at Llanuwchyllin, in Merionethshire, for twenty-seven years before he was called to preside over the academy. Dr. Lewis is advantageously known as the author of several of the most valuable theological works in the Welsh language. His *Body of Divinity*, in one large volume, and his *Commentary on the New Testament*, in seven octavo volumes, together with many valuable pamphlets, are lasting monuments of his learning, industry, and intimate acquaintance with the word of God. He is a Calvinist of the same school as Dr. John Owen. He died June 5, 1822, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

Mr. Edward Davies, A.M., who had been classical tutor since 1820, succeeded to the theological chair on the death of his father-in-law, Dr. Lewis; and Mr. Samuel Bowen, one of the senior students, conducted the classical department, until he removed to take the charge of a church at Macclesfield.

The Congregational Fund Board, having wholly supported the institution from its establishment in 1755, determined in the year 1836 to discontinue their grant, unless the Congregational churches of Wales would bear a part of the expense. When the matter was laid before the churches, they readily consented to do their part. Brecon was fixed upon as a more eligible place than Newtown: a suitable building having been purchased in that town for £1,150, the institution was trans-

ferred there in February, 1839. Mr. Charles Nice Davies, of Norwood, was then chosen to fill the theological chair, and Mr. E. Davies was appointed classical tutor. Mr. C. N. Davies's connection with the institution was soon terminated. He died January 22, 1842, aged 48 years.

Mr. Davies was succeeded in 1854 by Mr. Henry Griffiths, of Stroud, who ably discharged the duties of his office till 1853, when he took the charge of a church at Liverpool. Mr. (now Dr.) John Morris, of Morley, near Leeds, the present theological tutor, succeeded Mr. Griffiths.

Mr. Edward Davies, after serving the institution most efficiently as tutor for thirty-six years, was gathered to his fathers, February 25, 1857, aged 61 years. Mr. William Roberts, who was educated at Caermarthen and Glasgow, succeeded Mr. Davies as classical and mathematical tutor.

Mr. Roberts was an able and learned man, and discharged his professional duties efficiently for nearly sixteen years. His brilliant career was brought to a sudden and calamitous termination. While crossing the line at the railway-station at Malvern, on the evening of March 9, 1872, a passing train struck him, and he died instantaneously. After Mr. Roberts's death, at a general meeting of the subscribers in June, 1872, it was decided to have three tutors. Mr. David Rowlands, B.A., of Caermarthen, and Mr. William Oliver, M.A., of the University of Glasgow, were appointed. Mr. Rowlands still continues in his professorship, but Mr. Oliver resigned in December, 1882.

The college-house having become dilapidated, it became necessary to have a new building. A beautiful site of four acres was purchased, a few hundred yards outside the town, and a magnificent college-house was built there. The foundation-stone was laid June 13, 1867, by Samuel Morley Esq., M.P., and the new building was opened September 15, 1869. The outlay amounted to eleven thousand pounds, and as most of the money had been collected during the bicentenary movement, commenced in 1862, the new college is called "The Brecon Memorial College."

The income of the institution in the year ending March 31,

1882, was £1,983 13s. 3½d., including the grant of £450 from the Congregational Fund Board, but exclusive of Thomas's scholarship, which is twenty pounds a year, the interest of five hundred pounds, which the Rev. Robert Thomas, of Hanover, Monmouthshire, a former student, generously handed to trustees to found a scholarship in connection with his *Alma Mater*. The present number of students is twenty nine. Since Mr. Oliver's resignation, Dr. Morris and Mr. Rowlands are the only professors. It is not probable that a third tutor will be appointed again.

LADY HUNTINGDON'S COLLEGE AT TREVECCA.

This institution was publicly opened August 24, 1768, when a sermon was preached by the celebrated George Whitefield. The successive tutors of this seminary were clerical Methodists, the last of whom was Mr. John Williams, of Pantycelyn. He presided over it from January, 1786, till April, 1791. William Roby, of Manchester, Timothy Wildbore, of Falmouth, and several other young men who became eminent and useful, were among Mr. Williams's pupils. The institution was removed to Cheshunt, near London, in 1792.

THE SEMINARY AT NEUADDLWYD.

This eminently useful institution was established in 1810. A considerable number of excellent ministers were educated here. The tutor, Dr. Thomas Phillips, was a man of extraordinary talents, and one of the most successful ministers in his own or any other age. The seminary was dissolved on his death, which occurred December 22, 1842.

THE INDEPENDENT COLLEGE AT BALA.

This college was instituted in 1841, under the presidency of the talented Michael Jones, minister of the Congregational church in that town. The original intention of the promoters of its formation was to set up a preparatory school, to prepare young preachers for the colleges at Caermarthen, Brecon, and the Congregational colleges in England. But after several of

the students, who became useful and popular ministers, had been ordained from this school, without seeking admission to any other institution, it gradually rose to such importance and efficiency in the estimation of the Welsh churches, that it has long since been generally regarded as a college of the same rank as the older institutions at Caermarthen and Brecon.

Mr. Jones died October 23, 1853, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He was a very able man, and a theologian of the first class, possibly the ablest in Wales. Soon after his death his son, of the same name, succeeded him in the church and the college. In 1859 Mr. John Peter, one of the students, was appointed assistant or second tutor, and he continued to serve the institution with great efficiency, faithfulness, and growing reputation, to the time of his lamentable death, which took place January 17, 1877, after a few days' illness, at the early age of forty-four years. In the year 1872, Mr. Robert Thomas, of Bangor, was appointed theological lecturer, and soon after he accepted the call of the church at Bala, in order to be more convenient to attend his duties at the college. In 1874 Mr. Thomas Lewis, B.A. was appointed to fill the place of the president, Mr. Michael D. Jones, when he proposed to go out for five years to collect towards the new college which it was agreed to build, at an outlay of £8,000. In 1876 several of the supporters of the institution expressed a desire to alter its constitution, by placing it under the control of a committee, consisting of two persons from each County Association. Mr. Jones and his supporters objected to the alteration, and insisted upon its being carried on as it had been from the beginning, under the control of as many of the subscribers as might happen to be present at all the ordinary or any extraordinary meetings. Stormy meetings and bitter discussions on the subject were carried on for about two years, and ultimately a division took place. Mr. Jones and Mr. Thomas formed what is called the Old Constitution College, and Mr. Lewis still works under the New Constitution. How long this unhappy state of things will last no one knows. Mr. Lewis is assisted by Mr. E. M. Edmunds, and Mr. Jones by Mr. Thomas Rees, from Caermarthen College. The number of

students, in both the New and the Old, is the same—twenty-five. The income of the New Constitution branch last year was £1,123 1s. 5d., including special contributions to clear the debt. The income of the Old Constitution branch was £704 16s. 11½d.

Mr. Robert Thomas died April 23, 1880, in the seventieth year of his age. He was ordained in the year 1840, and was minister for longer or shorter periods at Dinas, Merionethshire, Liverpool, Rhos, Denbighshire, Bangor, and Bala. He was a great man, an able divine, a celebrated poet, and one of the most popular preachers in Wales.

Several Congregational and Presbyterian ministers have within the last two centuries been masters of very celebrated schools, at which large numbers of candidates for the ministry have been educated. The school of Rees Prytherch, at Ystradwalter, near Llandovery, was in high repute during the last forty years of the seventeenth century. Mr. Samuel Jones, of Capel Sion, Caermarthenshire, who resided at Pentwyn, in the parish of Llanon, was a most famous school-master from 1730 to 1750, as was also Mr. D. Davies, of Castellhowell, Cardiganshire, from 1775 to 1825. Dr. William Davies, of Frood Vale, Caermarthenshire, was a most successful tutor for nearly thirty years. His school was discontinued a few years ago, when he accepted the office of mathematical tutor at Caermarthen College. Mr. D. Davies, of Penywaun, Monmouthshire, and Mr. William Davies, of Rhydyceisiaid, Caermarthenshire, have educated a number of useful ministers. Dr. Evan Davies's school at Swansea was one of the most efficiently conducted schools in the kingdom. Many of his pupils have excelled at the English and Scotch Universities.

THE BAPTIST COLLEGES.

The Welsh Baptists had no college till the year 1807, but several of their ministers, from time to time, were trained at Bristol and other seats of learning. They have now three flourishing colleges in the Principality.

PONTYPOOL COLLEGE.

This college was instituted at Abergavenny in the year 1807, under the presidency of Mr. Micah Thomas, minister of the Baptist church in that town. He presided over it with care, wisdom, efficiency, and universal approbation, for twenty-nine years. In 1836 the institution was removed from Abergavenny to Pontypool, as a more central place. Dr. Thomas Thomas, a former student at Abergavenny, was appointed president on the opening of the college at Pontypool, and he occupied that responsible position, with honour to himself and satisfaction to all the friends and supporters of the institution, from 1836 to 1877. Mr. George Thomas, M.A., a most excellent man, was classical and Hebrew tutor from 1841 to 1869, when he resigned, but he continued afterwards to teach Hebrew and the Greek Testament until 1871, when age and failing health disabled him. This good man died November 8, 1873. Mr. James Sully, M.A., was classical tutor from January, 1869, to December, 1870. He was succeeded by Mr. W. M. Lewis, M.A., who served the college as classical tutor from January, 1871 to 1877, when, on Dr. Thomas's resignation, he was promoted to the presidency; a position which he worthily filled until his calamitous death in 1880. Mr. W. Edwards, B.A., has been the president since 1881, and Mr. D. Thomas, B.A., the classical tutor since 1877. The income of the college for the year 1881-82 was £1,200 3s. 3½d. The number of students is twenty-three.

HAVERFORDWEST COLLEGE.

This college was instituted in the year 1839. The first president was Mr. David Davies. He died in March, 1856. Dr. Thomas Davies succeeded him, and has now presided over the institution for twenty-six years. In 1841 Mr. T. G. Jones was appointed classical tutor. He was there for twelve years, and left in 1853. Mr. T. Burdett, M.A., succeeded him, and resigned in 1865. Mr. G. H. Rowse, M.A. LL.B., occupied the classical chair from 1866 to 1872, when he left for India.

He was succeeded by Mr. W. Edwards, B.A., now president of Pontypool College, from 1872 to 1880. The present occupant of the chair is Mr. T. W. Davies, B.A., who entered on his duties in January, 1881. The income for the year ending June 30, 1882, was £924 16s. The number of students is twenty.

LLANGOLLEN COLLEGE

Was instituted in the year 1862. Dr. John Prichard was the president for the first four years, and Dr. H. Jones, the present president, was the classical tutor. From 1866 to 1870 Dr. Jones was the sole tutor. From 1870 to the present time Dr. Jones has been president, and Mr. Gethin Davies, B.A., classical and mathematical tutor. There are now seventy-six ministers educated at this college engaged as pastors of churches, and fourteen students who have completed their collegiate course, but have not yet settled as pastors, besides several that died since 1862. The number of students now in the college is nineteen. The income for the year 1882 was £1,060 3s. 3d.

THE CALVINISTIC METHODIST COLLEGES.

The following quotation from Williams' "Historical Sketch of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism" is the best account we can give of the colleges of this body.

"The Welsh Methodist Connexion existed for upwards of a century without a college of its own, though it never was without some men who had received a collegiate education. For many years it had among its ministers a few who had been trained for the Establishment. Some were educated at the Countess's College at Trevecca, and afterwards at Cheshunt; while others went for a time, either at their own expense or by the assistance of kind friends, to superior schools at Chester, Liverpool, and other places. There were a great many in the Connexion who, to say the least, were not favourably disposed towards a college training for ministers, and they found some apology for their feelings in the fact that some of their most popular and efficient preachers were not collegians. They

were men who had studied hard, and had acquired by their own unaided exertions more of those qualifications which are essential to the efficient discharge of the duties of the ministry than some who had a collegiate training. While they themselves deplored their want of early advantages, there were not a few of their brethren who thought that they did quite as well, if not better, without them. But early in the present century the want of an institution for the training of ministers became increasingly felt, and the first movement towards securing that object was made in North Wales, in the year 1817. It was resolved to open an academy at Llangollen; a house was taken for the purpose, and Mr. Owen Williams, a very pious and talented young man from Anglesea, who had distinguished himself as a scholar, was chosen to be the tutor. He was sent to Hoxton Academy to more fully prepare himself for the important charge; but while assiduously pursuing his studies at that place he was taken ill and died. Some years later Mr. Evan Rowlands, a young man of earnest piety, good education, and superior talents, was chosen for this purpose. He went to Belfast to complete his studies; but the brethren were again doomed to disappointment, for Mr. Rowlands's health broke down and he was taken away.

"After many unsuccessful attempts on the part of the Connexion to procure this first requisite of a college, the great Master was at length pleased to provide tutors in every way qualified for the work. The Rev. Lewis Edwards, M.A., who had studied and taken high honours at Edinburgh, was led to settle at Bala, through marrying the grand-daughter of the renowned Thomas Charles. Her brother, the Rev. David Charles, B.A., returned from Oxford about the same time, and the two brothers-in-law joined to open 'The Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Theological Institute,' at Bala, in 1837; and the North Wales Association, held at Caernarvon in September, 1839, adopted this institute as a college for the Connexion, and decided upon rules for its management and measures for its support.

"The few survivors of the Trevecca 'family,' who were now the owners of the 'house' which had been built by Howell

Harries, presented this commodious edifice to the South Wales Association for the purpose of a college, and efforts were therefore made on the part of the brethren in the South to have the institution which was at Bala removed to this place; but the Northern friends could not be brought to assent to this proposal, and it was ultimately agreed that Mr. Edwards should remain at Bala, and that an additional college should be opened at Trevecca, to be presided over by Mr. Charles. Soon after his departure for the South the Rev. John Parry was appointed to succeed him at Bala. That institution has been growing in importance from year to year, and is still carried on successfully under the charge of Dr. Edwards and Messrs. E. Edwards, M.A., and H. Williams, M.A., who were appointed to succeed Dr. Parry, who died in 1874. For many years it was supported by annual subscriptions from individual friends and collections in the churches; but these sources of revenue proving uncertain and precarious, the Rev. Edward Morgan, of Dyffryn, suggested that a fund, which would be adequate for the permanent endowment of the college, should be at once collected. It was acknowledged by all that this was a grand idea; but then came the question, Where was the man to be found that would put it in practice? Mr. Morgan undertook the gigantic task, and in about five years collected £25,000 from the Calvinistic Methodists of North Wales, and of three or four large towns in England. When this had been done, it was resolved to collect another fund to erect a college building worthy of the institution and of the Connexion to which it belonged. This edifice cost about £8,000, and Mr. Morgan had succeeded in collecting the greater part of this additional sum when he was called to his rest, on the 9th of May, 1871.

“The college at Trevecca was opened in 1842, and Dr. Charles conducted it for twenty years. His self-sacrificing zeal and unwearied application to the onerous duties of his position, made that college a great blessing to the Connexion in South Wales. In the year 1862 Dr. Charles found it necessary, to the regret of the friends, to resign the presidency of the college; and as it was resolved not to open it again

without two tutors, the difficulty of coming to a satisfactory arrangement in the matter led to its being closed for more than three years. There was one highly-qualified tutor whose services could be secured, but the difficulty was to find a second. At length all difficulties were surmounted, and the college was re-opened in September, 1865, with the Rev. William Howells, then of Liverpool, as president, and the Rev. J. Harries Jones, Ph.D., as classical tutor. The college remains under their able superintendence, and is eminently successful. Before the institution at Trevecca was first opened, a fund of £6,000 was collected in South Wales towards its support; but the success of Mr. Morgan led the South Wallian friends to resolve to raise their fund to an equal amount to that of Bala, and this has been successfully carried out by the Rev. Edward Matthews, of Bonvilleston." The fund of Trevecca College is about £21,000, producing an annual income of £900. The number of students at Bala in the year 1882 was forty-nine, and at Trevecca thirty.

Dr. David Charles, one of the founders of the Connexional colleges, finished his useful career December 13, 1878, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the forty-third of his ministry. His colleague, Dr. Edwards, is still among us, and actively engaged in his Master's service.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A. (P. 14.)

EDITIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES IN THE WELSH LANGUAGE FROM
1567 TO 1800.

Size.	When published.	By whom.	Number of copies printed.	Contents of the Edition.
4to.	1567	William Salesbury.	About 600	The New Testament only.
Folio.	1588	Dr. William Morgan.	600	The whole Bible.
Folio.	1620	Dr. Richard Parry.	1,000	Ditto.
8vo.	1630	R. Heylin and Sir. T. Middleton.	1,500	Ditto.
8vo.	1641	W. Wroth and W. Cradock.	...	The New Testament.
12mo.	1646	W. Cradock.	...	Ditto.
12mo.	1647	Ditto.	3,000	Ditto.
8vo.	1654	Ditto, and V. Powell.	6,000	The whole Bible.
8vo.	1654	Ditto, ditto.	...	The New Testament.
8vo.	1671	S. Hughes.	6,000	The whole Bible.
8vo.	1672	T. Gouge and S. Hughes.	...	The Psalms and the New Testament.
8vo.	1677	Ditto, ditto.	8,000	The whole Bible.
8vo.	1690	David Jones, an ejected minister.	10,000	Ditto.
Folio.	1690	Bishop Lloyd, of St. Asaph.	1,000	Ditto.
8vo.	1718	The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.	10,000	Ditto.
8vo.	1727	Ditto, ditto.	20,000	Ditto.
8vo.	1746	Ditto, at the instigation of Griffith Jones.	12,000	Ditto.
8vo.	1752	Ditto, ditto.	10,000	Ditto.
8vo.	1769	Ditto, at the instigation of Dr. Llewellyn.	20,000	Ditto.
12mo.	...	Eddows, a printer at Shrewsbury.	2,000	The New Testament.
4to.	1770	With Notes by P. Williams.	3,600	The whole Bible.
4to.	1779	Ditto.	6,400	Ditto.
8vo.	1789	... ..	...	Ditto.
Small 8vo	1790	Peter Williams and David Jones.	4,000	Ditto.
4to.	1796	Peter Williams.	4,000	Ditto.
4to.	1797	... ..	...	The New Testament.

NOTE B. (P. 27.)

In the present edition this Note has been incorporated with the text *in loco*.

NOTE C. (P. 60.)

The Congregational Church at Llanvaches was formed in November, 1639. This was the first Nonconforming church in Wales. The following is a list of its pastors from 1639 to the present time :—

William Wroth ; died in 1642.
 Walter Cradock ; died in 1659.
 Thomas Ewins ; removed to Bristol.
 Thomas Barnes ; died in 1703.
 David Williams ; died in 1754.
 Roger Rogers ; died in 1766.
 Thomas Saunders ; died in 1790.
 Howell Powell ; emigrated to America about 1800.
 William George ; removed to Ross.
 Walter Thomas ; removed to Glamorganshire.
 James Williams ; removed to Llanvapley.
 James Peregrine ; emigrated to America.
 James Griffiths ; removed to Wiltshire.
 David Thomas was the pastor from 1828 to 1864.
 John P. Jones, from 1867 to 1870.
 W. J. Price, the pastor since 1871.

The cause at one time had been reduced to such a low state, that only one elderly woman participated of the Lord's Supper with the pastor. Feeling greatly discouraged, he said to her that the place should be closed, promising to visit her occasionally at her house ; but she remonstrated with him, saying, with tears, "Do not give up ; come here at least once more ; the Lord may visit us again." And the Lord did visit them. Before the next communion Sabbath, five or six persons had become candidates for membership.

The church which meets at Penmain, in the parish of Mynyddislwyn, Monmouthshire, is the second Nonconforming church in the Principality. It was formed about the close of 1639, or the beginning of 1640. The first chapel was built in 1694. Its pastors, down to the present time, were—

Henry Walter, who died some time between 1675 and 1680.
 John Powell, A.M. ; died in 1691.
 Watkin Jones ; died about 1693.
 John Harries ; excommunicated for drunkenness, 1708.
 David Williams ; ordained in 1710 ; died in 1759.
 Philip David ; ordained in 1739 ; died in 1787.

David Thomas ; ordained in 1787 ; died in 1837.

John Jones ; removed in 1839.

Edward Rees ; removed to Llandovery, and died in 1846.

Ellis Hughes ; the pastor since 1848 ; died 1881.

NOTE D. (P. 74.)

The following rare document is not to be found in any collection of statutes ; but a copy of it is preserved in the British Museum :—

“An Act for the better Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales, and redress of some grievances.

“The Parliament of England, taking into their serious consideration the great duty and trust that lies on them to use all lawful ways and means for the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this Commonwealth, in order thereunto, do enact and ordain, and be it enacted and ordained by this present Parliament, and by the authority thereof, that Col. Thomas Harrison, Col. Philip Jones, Col. John Jones, Sir John Trevor, Knight, Henry Herbert, Esq., William Herbert, William Parker, William Blethin, Christopher Catchmay, Reese Williams, John Nicholas, Edward Herbert, Robert Jones, Bussey Mansel, Edward Prichard, John Price, Rowland Dawkins, William Boteler, Edward Stradling, John Herbert, Richard Jones, Jenkin Franklyn, John James, Wroth Rogers, John Herring, Stephen Winthrop, Esqrs. ; Sir Erasmus Phillips, Samson Lort, Henry Williams, Silvanus Taylor, Richard King, John Williams, John Dancy, Thomas Watkins, James Phillips, John Lewis, William Barber, Esqrs. ; John Daniel, John Bowen, Gent., John Puleston, one of the Justices of the Court of Common Pleas, Humphrey Mackworth, William Littleton, Robert Duckenfield, Thomas Baker, Hugh Price, Evan Lloyd, Richard Price, Robert Griffith, Edward Owens, George Twistleton, John Carter, Thomas Mason, Lighton Owens, Rice Vaughan, Thomas Ball, Hugh Courtney, Edward Taylor, Roger Soutley, Esqrs. ; Daniel Lloyd, David Morris, William Wynne, Gentlemen ; Thomas Swift, Esq. ; Hugh Richard, Gent. ; John Saddler, John Peck, Luke Lloyd, Andrew Ellis, Ralph Crechley, Esqrs. ; Lewis Price, of Llanwenog, Henry Williams, John Brown, Gent., are hereby constituted and appointed to be Commissioners in the counties of Montgomery, Denbigh, Flint, Caernarvon, Merioneth, Anglesea, Monmouth, Glamorgan, Pembroke, Caermarthen, Cardigan, Brecknock, and Radnor, and every one of them, to put in execution the several powers and authorities hereinafter mentioned and directed (that is to say), that they, the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, shall have full power and authority, and hereby enabled and authorized to receive all articles or charges which shall be exhibited against any parson, vicar, curate, schoolmaster, or any other now having, or that shall have, any ecclesiastical benefit or promotion within the said counties or any of them, for any delinquency, scandal, malignancy, or non-residency, and upon such articles so exhibited to grant out warrants

in writing under the hands and seals of the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, to be directed to the party against whom such articles shall be exhibited, requiring his appearance before such Commissioners at a certain day and place in the said warrant mentioned, to answer the said charge or articles respectively, and after notice of the said warrant personally made or given to the said party articted against, or left at his dwelling-house or ordinary place of abode, and that notice proved by oath to be made by the space of ten days before the day of appearance in the said warrant mentioned (no just cause being made and proved to excuse the not appearing), and likewise after answer made by such as shall appear according to summons, then the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, are hereby enabled and authorized to proceed to examination of witnesses on oath; the said examinations and depositions of such witnesses to be put in writing, as well on the behalf of the Commonwealth to prove such articles, as on the behalf of the parties articted against to make good their answers; which oaths the said Commissioners, or any two or more of them, have hereby power to administer; and after due examination and proof made by confession of the party complained of, or by the oath of two credible witnesses, actually to amove, discharge, and eject all such ministers and other persons from their respective cures, benefices, places, and charges, as they the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, upon such hearing shall adjudge to be guilty of any of the crimes aforesaid, in the said articles contained and comprised; and after such judgment given, in case any person shall find himself aggrieved with such judgment so given, then it shall and may be lawful to and for any twelve or more of the said Commissioners, upon petition preferred to them by the party grieved, to review, examine, and reverse the same, if they or the greater part of them see just cause so to do; and if notwithstanding the said ejected person shall not find relief within six weeks after his petition so preferred, then the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, shall at the request of the parties aggrieved respectively, certify the respective proceedings and proofs in such cases respectively, to the Commitee of Parliament for Plundered Ministers; who are hereby authorized, upon the return of such certificates, and view of such proceedings and proofs, without further examination of witnesses in such cases, to examine the grounds of the said respective judgments appealed from, and to affirm or revoke the same, as they shall find it most agreeable to justice, and the tenor of this Act.

“And be it further enacted and declared, that the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, have hereby power and authority to allow the wife and children of such minister or ministers so ejected and amoved, for their maintenance, a proportion not exceeding a fifth part of the living, parsonage, benefice, vicarage, charge, or other place, out of which the said ministers shall be respectively removed (all parish charges, public taxes, and other duties being first deducted out of the whole).

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if any Parson or Vicar holdeth or enjoyeth, or which shall hold or enjoy, plurality of

benefices or ecclesiastical promotions (one or more of which being within the counties aforesaid), and upon a warrant directed to him under the hands of the said Commissioners, or any five of them, requiring him at a certain day and place in the said warrant mentioned, to make choice and elect which of the said benefices and ecclesiastical promotions he desires to hold; and upon notice of the said warrant, shall not within forty days after the said notice make his election, testified under his hand before five or more of the said Commissioners, which of the said benefices or promotions he desires to hold, then from and after such default (no just cause being proved to excuse the same) all his right, title, or interest in and to all such benefices and promotions, to cease, determine, and be utterly void. And to the end that godly and painful men, of able gifts and knowledge for the work of the ministry, and of approved conversation for piety, may be employed to preach the Gospel in the counties aforesaid (which heretofore abounded in ignorance and profaneness); and that fit persons, of approved piety and learning, may have encouragement to employ themselves in the education of children in piety and good literature;

“Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, be and are authorized and enabled to grant certificates by way of approbation to such persons as shall be recommended and approved of by Henry Walter, Walter Cradock, Richard Simonds, Roger Charnock, Jenkin Lloyd, Morris Bidwel, David Walter, William Seaborn, Edmond Ellis, Jenkin Jones, George Robinson, Richard Powel, Robert Powel, Thomas Ewen, John Miles, Oliver Thomas, Doctor John Ellis, Ambrose Moston, Stephen Lewis, Morgan Lloyd, William Jones, Richard Edwards, Vavasor Powel, Richard Swain, Rowland Nevet, ministers of the Gospel, or any five or more of them, for the preaching of the Gospel in the said counties, as well in settled congregations and parochial charges, as in an itinerary course, as the said Commissioners (by the advice of such of the said ministers as shall recommend and approve of the said persons respectively), shall adjudge to be most for the advancement of the Gospel, or for the keeping of schools and education of children. And to the end that a fitting maintenance may be provided for such persons as shall be so recommended and approved of, as also for such others approved by godly and painful ministers now residing within the said counties, for whose support and maintenance there is little or no settlement made or provided;

“Be it therefore enacted and ordained by the authority aforesaid, that in order to the said maintenance, and in the regulating, ordering, and disposal thereof, they, the said Commissioners, or any twelve or more of them, are hereby authorized and enabled by themselves, or others deriving authority from them, to receive and dispose of all and singular the rents, issues, and profits of all and every the Rectories, Vicarages, Donatives, Sine Curas, portion of tenths, and other ecclesiastical livings, which now are or hereafter shall be in the disposing of the Parliament, or any other deriving authority from them: as also to receive and dispose of the rents,

issues, and profits of all impropriations and glebe lands within the said counties which now are or hereafter shall be under sequestration or in the disposal of the Parliament, by virtue of any former statute, or any Act or ordinance of this present Parliament.

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, or any twelve or more of them, shall and may out of the said rents, issues, and profits of the said Rectories, Vicarages, Donatives, Sine Curas, portion of tenths and other ecclesiastical promotions; as also out of the rents, issues, and profits of the said impropriations and glebe lands, order and appoint a constant yearly maintenance for such persons as shall be recommended and approved of as aforesaid, for the work of the ministry or the education of children; as also for such other ministers as aforesaid, now residing within the said counties; provided that the yearly maintenance of a minister does not exceed one hundred pounds, and the yearly maintenance of a schoolmaster exceed not forty pounds. And that godly ministers who have or shall have wife or children, may not too much be taken off from their duties in the ministry, with the care and consideration of maintenance for their wives and children, after their decease, but that some care thereof may be had by others, whereby a greater encouragement may be given to them to set themselves the closer to the work of the said ministry;

“Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, or any twelve or more of them, are hereby enabled and authorized to make such yearly allowance to the wife and children of such godly minister after his decease, as to the said Commissioners, or any twelve of them, shall seem reasonable, for the necessary support and maintenance of the said wife or children, or any of them: provided always that such allowance so to be made to such wife and children do not exceed the yearly sum of thirty pounds: and if any person or persons, being tenants, occupier of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, liable and subject to the payment of any tenths, or other duties, in right payable or belonging to any Parsonage, Vicarage, or any the abovesaid ecclesiastical promotions, shall refuse payment thereof, then the said Commissioners, or any two or more of them, are hereby authorized and enabled to put in execution against every person and persons so refusing, the powers and authorities vested and settled by this present Parliament in the Justices of the Peace for the relief of ministers from whom such tenths and duties are detained and subtracted.

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, or any twelve or more of them, out of the said tenths, rents, and profits, by them receivable by force of this Act, shall and may allow such moderate salary or wages to such person or persons who shall be employed in the receiving, keeping, and disposal thereof, or any part thereof, as they shall conceive to be necessary and reasonable.

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all and every person or persons qualified and approved of as abovesaid, for the preaching of the Gospel as aforesaid, who shall be vested or settled by the said Com-

missioners, or any twelve or more of them, in any Rectory, Vicarage, or parochial charge, which the said Commissioners or any twelve or more of them have hereby power to do, shall be deemed and adjudged to be seized of the same, as fully and amply to all intents and purposes, as if such person and persons were presented, instituted, and inducted to and in the same, according to former laws in such cases used and provided. And whereas the remoteness of the said counties from the Courts of Justice at Westminster, occasioneth many acts of high misdemeanours, oppression, and injury to be committed there, which oftentimes escape unpunished, and the parties aggrieved thereby, for want of means to seek relief by due course of law, left remediless; to the end therefore that such misdemeanours, oppressions, and injuries, may the better be inquired after, and the parties aggrieved thereby, without much expense of moneys, or loss of time, may be in some way of relief;

“Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, shall have and hereby have full power and authority to receive all complaints which shall be brought before them, of any such misdemeanours, oppression, or injury, committed by any person or persons within the said counties or any of them; and by warrant directed to the party complained of, under the hands and seals of the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, to appear before them at a certain day and place in the said warrant mentioned, requiring an answer to the said complaints: and after answer made, then, with the consent of both parties, testified under their hands and seals, to proceed to hear and determine the same. And whereas sufferings of that nature generally fall upon persons well affected to the Parliament, and such as have acted in and for their service, which said persons are not of ability to travel to London, to be relieved by the Committee of Parliament commonly called the Committee of Indemnity;

“Be it therefore enacted and ordained by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, or any five or more of them, shall be and are hereby made and constituted a Committee of Indemnity, to all intents and purposes, within the counties aforesaid, for the hearing and determining of all matters and things properly relievable and determinable by the said Committee of Indemnity. Provided always, that if any person or persons shall find him or themselves aggrieved at the proceedings of the said Commissioners acting as a Committee of Indemnity, then the said person or persons so aggrieved shall and may prosecute his and their petition or appeal for relief, in such manner and form as in and by this Act is prescribed in the cases of ejected ministers, and bring the same to a final determination, before the said Committee of Indemnity sitting at Westminster, which said Committee are hereby authorized to hear and determine the same, as they shall see just cause.

“And be it further enacted, that all power and authority formerly vested in any Committee within the said counties, or any of them, for the placing of ministers in ecclesiastical livings or promotions, be from henceforth

determined : and that no person or persons shall be from henceforth vested and settled in any Rectory, Vicarage, or any ecclesiastical promotion within any of the said counties, unless such person or persons so to be vested or settled, be recommended and approved of for the work of the ministry, according to the tenor and true meaning of this Act : and that this Act shall continue and be in force for the space of three years, from the Five-and-twentieth day of March, One thousand six hundred and fifty, and no longer.

“ Die Veneris, 22 Februarii, 1649. Ordered by the Parliament, that this Act be forthwith printed and published.

“ *Hen : Scobell. Clerii. Parliamenti :* ”

INDEX.

A.

ABBEY lubbers, 6.
 Abbot, Archbishop, 41.
 Abbot, John, 93, 106, 140.
 Aberdaron, the drunken vicar of, 9.
 Abergavenny, baptismal controversy at, 92; Independent Academy at, 497; Antipædobaptist Academy at, 504.
 Absurd fabrication respecting chapels, 455.
 Academy at Shrewsbury, 291.
 Academy, the first Nonconforming in Wales, 493.
 Act, the Conventicle, 154; the Corporation, 155; the Five Mile, *id.*; for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, 74, 511; the Test, 155; the Toleration, 245, 369; for translating the Bible into Welsh, 10; the Uniformity, 122.
 Aldermen Heylin and Middleton publishing the Welsh Bible, 14.
 Ambrose, William, 477.
 America, Abel Morgan emigrating to, 301.
 Anabaptists, Baxter's remarks on, 93.
 Angels, two boys preaching like, 445.
 Anglesea, Bishop Baylis's visitation in, 8; religious statistics of, 261; no Dissenters here in 1742, 359; an incident in the life of Lewis Rees in, 416; the first Dissenting interest in, 401; numerical strength of Nonconformists in, 450, 451, 461.
 Anglicised Welshmen, 3.
 Antipædobaptists, the first church of in Wales, 91; Vavasor Powell joining the, 93; the founder of in Wales, 114; Millenarian sentiments held by, 280; numerical strength of, 462; colleges of, in Wales, 503.
 Anti-Trinitarians, the, excluded from the benefits of the Toleration Act, 245.
 Apology, an, for Ministers, 45.
 Apostle, the, of Caermarthenshire, 222.

Apostle, the, of Wales, 39.
 Approvers, the, 74.
 Arianism in Cardiganshire, 182.
 Arm, the, of a persecutor putrified, 168.
 Arminian, the, controversy, 272.
 Arminianism, the first preacher of, in Wales, 272.
 Assizes, the, removed from Llanfyllin to Welshpool, 268.
 Association, the, origin of, 369.
 Associations of the Antipædobaptists, 92; of the Calvinistic Methodists, 362, 364.
 Aubrey, Richard, the church of Swansea becoming Unitarian in his time, 187.
 Aubrey, Thomas, 466.

B.

"Babylonish Welsh Baptists" the, 389.
 Baddy, Thomas, 278, 301.
 Baker, Justice, his cruelty, 168.
 Baker, Mrs., of Swiney, 290.
 Bala, persecution at, 371; Lewis Rees at, 414; Academies at, 501, 506.
 Bangor, the state of the diocese of, 5.
 Bangor, minister ejected from, 124.
 Baptism, controversies on, 92, 271.
 Baptist, the, Union of Wales, 457.
 "Barefaced Baxterianism," 256.
 Barnes, Thomas, of Magor, 141.
 Barnet, 294.
 "Baxter's Call," 177.
 Beaumont, James, 363.
 Bedwas, conventicles at, 173.
 Bedwellty, conventicles at, 173.
 Bees kept in a church, 9.
 Bennett, Colonel, 78.
 Berridge, John, 32.
 Bethel, speak in, 6.
 Bevan, Llewellyn, 263.
 Beynon, Thomas, of Kilcam, 261.
 Bible, the, its translation into Welsh, 13; Dr. Morgan's edition, 14; Salesbury's New Testament, 16; Dr. Parry's edition, 19; small octavo

- pub. in 1671, 196; an octavo edition pub. in 1677, 197; editions of the Scriptures published in the Welsh language from 1567 to 1800, 509; the Family, 410; the chief inheritance, 415; Dr. Jenkins's Commentary on, 448.
- Bible Christians, 463.
- Bibles, grant of, under Dr. Williams's will, 298.
- Bidwell, Morris, of Swansea, 118.
- Bishop, a, holding sixteen livings in *commendam*, 5.
- Bishop Farrar martyred, 3.
- Blaenyglyn, Association at, 366.
- Blind-speaking priest, the, 116.
- Blethyn, Major, 189.
- Bodwell, J. Owen at, 289.
- Bogue, Dr., his sermon translated, 416.
- "Bold, an ignorant fellow," 36.
- Book, the, of the Resolution, 198.
- "Book of Sports," 35.
- Books, the, first published in the Welsh language, 3; list of, by James Owen, 293; Welsh, published from 1600, 195; published during the reigns of Charles II. and James I., 195-199.
- Bowen, Evan, founder of the church at Troedriwdalar, 119.
- Bowen, Samuel's, work on the Atonement, 432.
- Bowen, Thomas, Maesyronen, fined, 380.
- Bowen, Major, of Llwngwair, 445.
- Brecon, college at, 499.
- Breconshire, ministers ejected in, 123; churches in, 261.
- Bretons, a missionary among the, 448.
- "Brief Narrative" by V. Powell, 85-90.
- Broster, John, 135.
- Bryan, John, 420.
- Brychgoed, the church at, 357.
- Brynberian, a branch of Llechryd, 193.
- Brynlwarch, 231; Academy at, 493.
- Bull, Bishop, 314.
- Burleigh, Lord, Penry's letter to, 27.
- Bywater, John, 151.
- C.
- "Cae'r fendith," the field of blessing, 160.
- Caerhun, three sermons at, 9.
- Caernarthenshire, ministers ejected in, 127; houses licensed in, 178; churches in, 183; religious statistics of, 261.
- Caernarvonshire, ministers ejected in, 129; churches in, *ib.*; religious statistics of, 262.
- Caerphilly, the Van, 38.
- Calumniator, the, of the itinerants, 84.
- Calvinistic, the, Methodists' Colleges, 505.
- "Candle, the Welshman's," 32.
- "Canwyll Crist," 197.
- Capel Isaac, 184.
- Cardiff, church at, 60.
- Cardiganshire, ministers ejected in, 124-127; churches in, 182; Arian sentiments in the churches of, *ib.*; present Independent churches of modern date, 183; religious statistics of, 261, 450, 461.
- Carelessness of the clergy, 13.
- Carstairs, Principal, 296.
- Carver, John, of Tenby, 151.
- Cary, Nicholas, of Monmouth, 141.
- Case, Dr., Wroth's tutor, 37.
- Catalogue, a, of Congregational churches in Wales, 181.
- Cefnarthfen and Pentretygwyn, 184.
- Cefnlllys, rector of, 17.
- Cessation, the, of persecution, 418.
- "Chaff, heathen," 32.
- Chapels, demolished by the mob, 267, 268.
- Chapels, erection of, 246, 247, 454, 455.
- Charles, David, of Caernarthen, 427.
- Charles, David, D.D., Trefecca, 508.
- Charles, Thomas, joining the Methodists' Association, 365; his labours, 390.
- Christopher, Jacob, 139.
- Churchmen, their efforts to crush Non-conformists, 452; present attitude of, 453.
- Circulating, the, schools of G. Jones, 316-318; of Dr. Williams, 393.
- Civil war, 63; its effects on Wales, 66.
- Clergy, immoral character of, 2-7; number ejected during the Interregnum, 83; character of, after the Restoration, 194.
- Cloddiau Cochion, harassing the Friends at, 169.
- Cole, Thomas, 259.
- Colleges in Wales from A.D. 1662 to the present time, 492-508.
- Commandments, the Ten, translated, 3.
- Commendam, sixteen livings held in, 5.
- Commissioners, the Seventy-one, 74; Cromwell's letter to, 81; persons appointed to examine the accounts of, 82.

Communion, mixed, ill effects of, 190, 191.
 Concordance, the first in the Welsh language, 301.
 Concubines kept, 2.
 Confiscating a minister's estate, 113.
 Congregational Union of Wales, 458.
 Congregationalists, numerical strength of, 450, 461.
 Consett, William, 91.
 Controversies, religious, 95 ; 255 ; 331-433.
 Conventicle Act, 154.
 Conventicles in Wales, 172-177.
 Converted by looking through a key-hole, 299.
 Corporation Act, 155.
 Corpses unburied, 9.
 Cradock, Richard, 139.
 Cradock, Walter, 46 ; refusing to read the "Book of Sports" and settling at Wrexham, 47 ; compelled to leave through the influence of a maltster, 48 ; hiding at Brampton Briars, *ib.* ; settling at Llanvaches, 49 ; fleeing to Bristol, *ib.* ; going to London, and preaching at Allhallows, 50 ; his death, *ib.* ; his character, 53.
 Cragg, John, 93.
 Craigyfargod, an Arminian church at, 274.
 Creed, Richard, 51.
 Creed, the, translated, 3.
 Crisp, Dr., his Antinomianism, 296.
 Cromwell, his letter to the Commissioners, 81 ; Quakers imprisoned during his Protectorate, 95.
 Crossways, prayers at, 10.
 "Crusts, legal," 32.
 Curate, a, dismissed for being too religious, 409.
 Cwmhwplin, the cave of, 224.

D.

David, Evan, imprisoned at Tregaron, 171.
 David, Lewis, fined, 169.
 Davies, Charles Nice, Brecon, 500.
 Davies, David, of Castellhowell, 441.
 Davies, E., A.M., Brecon, 499.
 Davies, David, of Gellygaer, 139.
 Davies, Thomas, D.D., Haverfordwest, 504.
 Davies, Daniel, D.D., 491.
 Davies, D., Penywaun, 503.
 Davies, David, of Swansea, 391 ; the effects of his preaching, 393 ; his life, 434-440.
 Davies, Dr. Evan, Swansea, 503.

Davies, Henry, his letters to Howell Harries, 346-349.
 Davies, Howell, 352.
 Davies, John, of Cardiff, 490.
 Davies, John, Cwmllynfell, 263.
 Davies, James (Dewi ab Iago), 300.
 Davies, James, Llanafan, 261.
 Davies, James, Merthyr, Caermarthenshire, 128.
 Davies, James, Merthyr Tydvil, 308.
 Davies, Meredith, of Llanon, 128.
 Davies, Dr. Richard, Bishop of St. David's, his life, 16, 17.
 Davies, William, Capel Isaac, 262.
 Davies, Dr. William, Frood Vale, 503.
 Davies, Richard, of Penbryn, 126.
 Davies, William, Rhydyceisiaid, 503.
 Davies, William, Fishguard, 438.
 Davies, Timothy, of Evesham, 444.
 Davies, Thomas, Pembroke, 264.
 Davies, Thomas, Haverfordwest, 264.
 Davies, T. W., B.A., Pontypool, 505.
 Davies, William, D.D., 490.
 Degradation, Wales elevated from, 1.
 Demolished chapels restored by the State, 268.
 Denbighshire, ministers ejected in, 131-134 ; churches in, 262.
 Denbury, George, of Swansea, 268.
 Dialects, the, of the South and North, a hindrance, 177.
 Dinas, Lewis Rees's danger at, 415.
 Diocese, the, of Bangor, its state, 4, 5.
 Disagreement between Harries and Rowlands, 381 ; its probable cause, 384.
 Dissenters, the, persecuted under the Stuarts, 194.
 Dolphin, the, in Bristol, 49.
 Draper, Edward, 91.
 Drowned by lust, 11.
 Drummer, a, disturbing a meeting, 248.

E.

Edmunds, Jeremiah, of Trosnant, 260.
 Edward VI., progress of the Reformation under, 2.
 Edwards, Charles, 198.
 Edwards, David, Kilgwyn, 261.
 Edwards, John, of Llangors, 123.
 Edwards, Lewis, D.D., Bala, 507.
 Edwards's, Thomas, book, 256.
 Edwards, William, of Caernarvon, his sufferings, 377-379.
 Edwards, William, of Groeswen, 363.
 Edwards, W., B.A., Pontypool, 504.
 Ejected, the, clergy, 83.
 "Elegy," the, of Williams, on H. Harries, 279.

Elias, John, his ordination, 427.
 Ellis, Edmund, 135.
 English churches, number of, in Wales, 460.
 Epitaph, an, in Llangynwyd, 231.
 Erasmus, the paraphrase of, 4.
 Erbery, William, his life, 42-46, 117.
 Established Church, the attachment of the early Methodists to, 364.
 Evans, Caleb, 265.
 Evans, Dr. Caleb, 124.
 Evans, Christmas, 391; the effects of his preaching, 393.
 Evans, Edward, dying in prison, 158.
 Evans, Ellis, D.D., 490.
 Evans, Hugh, "the Blind Priest of Radnorshire," 115, 116.
 Evans, Hugh, of Bristol, 124.
 Evans, John, of Bangor, Cardigan-shire, 124.
 Evans, John, of Cobin, 265.
 Evans, John, abusing Griffith Jones, 320.
 Evans, John, of Wrexham, 146, 147.
 Evans, Dr. John, 147; his statistics of the Nonconforming churches, 259-265.
 Evans, John, of Llwynffortun, 427.
 Evans, Matthew, of Penegos, 146.
 Evans, William, Caermarthen, 261.
 Evans, Thomas, 123.
 Exhorters, how recognized, 363.

F.

Fabrication, an absurd, respecting Welsh chapels, 455.
 Fairfax, Sir Thomas, 55.
 Farmer, Hugh, 283.
 Father, the, and founder of Nonconformity in Wales, 42.
 Field, Dr. T., 41.
 Five Mile Act, 155.
 Flintshire, ministers ejected in, 134; churches in, 263.
 Fogg, Robert, of Bangor, 134.
 Foundation, the, of Gospel work in Radnorshire, 193.
 Francis, Abel, 273.
 Francis, Benjamin, of Horsley, 307.
 Francis, Enoch, of Capel Iago, 273, 275, 306.
 Freeman, Colonel, 82.
 Freeman, Thomas, 151.
 French, John, 138.
 Frew, the parson, his tragic end, 381.
 Friends (see Quakers) prosecuted for non-payment of tithes and church-rates, 280; present number of, 463.

Fruits, the, of G. Jones's (of Llanddowror) labours gathered by Nonconformists, 321.

G.

"Gangræna," the, of Thomas Edwards, 51, 54, 55.
 Gauler, Francis, 94.
 Gentleman, Robert, 496.
 Glamorganshire, ministers ejected in, 135-140; churches in, 177, 263.
 Gellygrug, Ambrose Mostyn at, 56.
 Glanrafonddu, an Association at, 366.
 Goat, the abstaining, 29.
 Gouge, Thomas, A.M., his life, labours, and sufferings, 198-206.
 Gower, Wesleyan Societies formed in, 418.
 Gray's Elegy, a translation of, 443.
 Gray, Thomas, of Abermeurig, 183.
 Green, William, Llandrindod, 179.
 Gregory, Henry, 152; his sufferings, 160.
 Griffiths, W., of Holyhead, 491.
 Griffiths, Alexander, 75, 76.
 Griffiths, Evan, 140.
 Griffiths, Vavasor, of Llwynllwyd, 353.
 Griffiths, Henry, Brecon, 500.
 Griffiths, Morgan, of Hengoed, 305.
 Griffiths, Morris, 152.
 Gronw, David ap, 16.
 Grundman, Martin, 143.
 Gwyn, Thomas, Llanigon, 113.
 Gwynne, David Lloyd, 125.

H.

Hanmer, John, 126.
 Harley, Sir Edward, 151.
 Harries, John, of Tregaron, 126.
 Harries, Howell, his conversion, 323-326; his evangelistic labours, 328; opposed by the clergy, and encouraged by Dissenting ministers, 334-349; several young clergymen co-operating with him, 349; his zeal for the Established Church, 355; setting up the Calvinistic Methodist body, and deserted by the Nonconformists, 355, 356; remonstrating with Edmund Jones, *ib.*; his sufferings, 370-372; disagreement between him and Rowlands, 381; setting up a kind of Protestant monastery, and joining the Militia, 383; his death, 384.
 Harries, Solomon, the church at Swansea becoming Arian in his time, 187.
 Harris, Hugh, Trefgarn, 264.

Harry, Elias, 123.
 Harry, John, Aberystwith, 260.
 Hart, Mr., of Kent, 130.
 Haverfordwest College, 504.
 Hawkins, Adam, 150.
 He-goat, the example of, 29.
 Henllan, origin of church at, 184 ;
 attempt to enforce Presbyterian
 discipline at, 153 ; agitated by a
 controversy, 256-258.
 Henry VIII., quarrelling with the
 Pope, 2.
 Henry, Matthew, 292.
 Henry, Philip, A.M., 135.
 Higgs, Daniel, 137.
 Holmes, Thomas, the first Quaker in
 Wales, 94.
 " *Horæ Britannicæ* " of John Hughes,
 420.
 Horeb, Cardiganshire, origin of
 church at, 184.
 Horsley, Bishop, his bigotry, 443.
 House, a, burnt by persecutors, 159.
 Houses licensed for preaching, a list
 of, 177-181.
 Howell, Morgan, his conversion, 48,
 126.
 Howells, David, Swansea, 476.
 Howell, Roger, Gellyonon, 274.
 Howells, William, Trevecca, 508.
 Huet, Thomas, 17.
 Hugh, David ap, 148.
 Hughes, Bishop of St. Asaph, 5.
 Hughes, Evan, 126.
 Hughes, Evan, Llandefriog, 125.
 Hughes, Hugh, his life, 448.
 Hughes, John, 420.
 Hughes, Owen, Llanedi, 262.
 Hughes, Stephen, ejected from Mei-
 drym, 128 ; his sufferings, 161 ;
 books published by, 195-198 ; his
 life and character, 222-225.
 Hughes, Thomas, of Bugeli, 150.
 Huntingdon, Lady, 32.

I.

Ilston, the first Antipædobaptist
 church in Wales, founded at, 90,
 114 ; John Myles ejected from the
 living of, *ib.* ; the church at, re-
 moved to Swansea, 188.
 Impiety of the clergy, 8.
 " Inconformity," tainted with, 33.
 Independency and Presbyterianism, a
 controversy on, 433.
 Independents, the, statistics of, 450 ;
 461.
 " Infant Baptism from Heaven," 252.
 Informers, their character, 155.
 Inquiries of the Bishop of Bangor, 4.

Irish, little better than the, 97.
 Itinerants, character of, 153.
 Ives, Jeremiah, 115.

J.

Jackson, Christopher, 150.
 James, James, his sufferings, 167.
 James, Thomas, 363.
 Jardine, David, 497.
 Jarman, Griffith, fined, 170.
 Jarman, John, his cow taken, 170.
 Jekyl, Sir Joseph, removing the assizes
 to Welshpool, 268.
 Jenkins, David, Llanedi, 262.
 Jenkins, Herbert, 363.
 Jenkins, Isaac, 487.
 Jenkins, John, D.D., 446-448.
 Jenks, David, 152.
 Jervise, William, 192.
 Jerusalem of South Wales, 40.
 Jessey, Henry, 60.
 John, Thomas, of Eglwysilan, 178.
 Jones, David, of Llanbadarnfawr, 125.
 Jones, David, of Llanddewibrefi, 178.
 Jones, David, of Llanwrda, 401-403.
 Jones, David, of Llandyssilio, 127.
 Jones, J., vicar of Llanllfyni, 10.
 Jones, Edmund, of Pontypool, his
 letters to Howell Harries, 336 ; his
 disagreement with Harries, 356,
 &c. ; his life, 404-408.
 Jones, John Harries, Ph.D., Trevecca,
 508.
 Jones, Gabriel, 143.
 Jones, Griffith, of Llanddowror, his
 life and character, 313-323.
 Jones, Jenkin, Cadoxton, 111-114.
 Jones, John (Mathetes), 491.
 Jones, John, 363.
 Jones, Humphrey, and the Revival,
 430.
 Jones, Michael, Bala, 501.
 Jones, Michael D., Bala, 502.
 Jones, Morgan, 136.
 Jones, Richard, of Denbigh, 132.
 Jones, Samuel, 230-242.
 Jones, Samuel, Capel Sion, 274.
 Jones, Thomas, of Llantrissant, 139.
 Jones, Thomas, of Swansea, 492.
 Jones's, Theophilus, History of Bre-
 conshire, 29.
 Jones, Watkin, 142.
 Jones, William, of Denbigh, 131.
 Jones, William, of Cilmaenllwyd, 127.
 Joseph, Thomas, 136, 177.
 Justices reprimanded by Judges, 248.

K.

Keach's, Benjamin, answer to J.
 Owen's book on Infant Baptism, 252.

Kenrick, Edward, Bronycludwr, 285.
 Kenrick, John, of Wrexham, 262.
 Kiffin, Mr., of London, 50.
 King George, his name quieting a mob, 384.

L.

Llanarmon, persecution at, 184.
 Llanedi, origin of church at, 184.
 Llanvaches, the first Nonconforming church in Wales, 60; list of its pastors, 510.
 Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, 8.
 Llanfairybryn, a mixed communion church at, 183.
 Llanfyllin, a discussion at, 206; chapel at, demolished by the mob, 268.
 Llangenych, professing people at, 184.
 Llangian, the curate of, 9.
 Llangollen College, 505.
 Llanwenarth, the church at, protesting against State aid, 81.
 Llanybree, the church at, 184.
 Legacy, the, of Hugh Owen, 283.
 Lewis, Ambrose, 133.
 Lewis, Christodocius, 264.
 Lewis, George, D.D., 499.
 Lewis, James, his life, 307, 308.
 Lewis, Jenkin, D.D., 498.
 Lewis, John, of Glasgrug, on the religious state of Wales, 12.
 Lewis, Morgan John, 363.
 Lewis, Philip, 128.
 Lewis, Thomas, 363.
 Lewis, Thomas, B.A., Bala, 502.
 Llewellyn, Evan, 140.
 Llewellyn, R. P., of Llangynwyd, 242.
 "Looking-glass," the, by Jones of Creaton, 428.
 Love, Christopher, 44.
 Lover of the Welsh, 194.
 Lloyd, Isaac, informing against Friends, 170.
 Lloyd, Jenkin, 118, 119.
 Lloyd, Morgan, of Wrexham, 108-110.
 Lloyd, Thomas, fined, 170.
 Lloyd, Dr. Thomas, 206.
 Lloyd, Dr. William, 206.
 Lloyd, William, imprisoned, 171.
 Ludlow, riotous proceedings at, 249.
 Luntley, John, 150.
 Luther, sympathizers with his views, 2.

M.

Machinery, the, of persecution, 155.
 Machynlleth, persecution at, 370.
 Mansel, Bussey, of Britton Ferry,

father-in-law of Lord Vernon, a member of the church at Cadogstone, 187.
 Marprelate, the, Tracts, 24.
 Martyrs in Wales, 3.
 Matthews, Edward, of Bonvilleston, 508.
 Matthews, Marmaduke, 53, 138.
 Maurice, David, a fierce persecutor, his tragic end, 169, 170.
 Maurice, Henry, 124; his account of the Nonconforming churches, 181-183; his life, 209-221.
 Maurice, Matthias, joining the church at Henllan, 302; betrayed into the hands of the *pressgang*, 303; regaining his liberty and settling in England, *ib.*; his care for his countrymen, and the works he published, 304, 305.
 Meetings at widow Zanche's house, 213.
 Members, church, increase of, 464.
 Merionethshire, ministers ejected in, 140; churches in, 180, 181.
 Methodism, Calvinistic, rise of in, Wales, 312; its leaders forming churches in the vicinity of Nonconforming churches, 313; the bearing of Griffith Jones's labours on the rise of, 314; the founder of, 323, 355; the first Association of, 362; separation from the Established Church agitated, 368; society meetings formed, 369; disturbed by Sandemanianism, 385; Peter Williams charged with heresy and expelled, 386; a revival commencing at Llangeitho, 390; separation of, from the Established Church, 424; first ordination of ministers, 427; the opposition of the clerical Methodists to ordination, 428; numerical strength of, 451, 462; colleges of, in Wales, 505.
 Methodism, Wesleyan, rise and progress of, in Wales, 419-423.
 Methodists, Primitive, 463.
 Meyrick, Dr. Rowland, 4.
 Middleton, Sir Thomas, 14.
 Millenarianism of the Antipædobaptists, 480.
 Miller, Joshua, 135.
 Millman, William, 142.
 Ministers, a list of, ejected by the Act of Uniformity, 123-152.
 Ministers, ordained, number of, in Wales, 464.
 Misleading account of "The Dry-sorfa," 278.

Missionary meeting, the first in Wales, 423.

Missionary, the London, Society, 423.

Money, the sum of, spent on chapels, 455.

Monmouthshire, ministers ejected in, 143; churches in, 264; numerical strength of Nonconformists in, 450, 451, 461, 462.

Montgomeryshire, ministers ejected in, 143-150; churches in, 264; numerical strength of Nonconformists in, 450, 451, 461, 462.

Morgan, Abel, author of the first Welsh Concordance, 300, 301.

Morgan, David, and the Revival, 430.

Morgan, Edward, of Dyffryn, 507.

Morgan, Owen, 141.

Morgan, Robert, 140.

Morgan, Reynold, 179.

Morgan, Thomas, 367.

Morgan, Dr. William, 5, 14, 17-19.

Morley, Samuel, M.P., 500.

"Morning Star," 32.

Morris, David, 403, 404.

Morris, Ebenezer, 440, 441.

Morris, John, D.D., Brecon, 500.

Morris, Thomas, Llanybree, 262.

Mostyn, Ambrose, his life, 56-58; gathering a church at Swausea, 61.

Myles, John, the founder of the Antipædobaptists in Wales, 90, 91; his life, 114, 115.

Mynyddislwyn, church formed at, 60.

N.

Narcott's "Baptism," &c., 255.

Neuaddlwyd, the Seminary at, 501.

Nevet, Rowland, 148, 149.

Newmarket, the town hall of, turned into a chapel, 186.

Nicol, William, 3.

Nonconformists, the prisons overcrowded with, 97; their efforts to propagate religion, 194; liberty conferred on, 245; ministers ordained by, 246; the Toleration Act did not exempt from mob persecution, 247-250; divided into parties, 257; slow progress of, 274; precarious state of religious liberty under Queen Anne, *ib.*; liberty conferred on the accession of George I., 275; rapid progress of, in South Wales, and slow progress in North Wales, 275-277; unfounded inference drawn therefrom, 277, 278; numerical strength of, 450-452, 461-464.

Nonconformity, how originated in

Wales, 3; character of the founders of, 34; seed time of, 120.

Non-resistance, and its results, 244.

O.

Obedience, passive, and its results, 244.

Olchon, the church at, 191.

Oliver, William, M.A., Brecon, 500.

Orange, William, Prince of, landing at Torbay, 243.

Ordination, a plea for scriptural, 233; by Nonconformists in 1688, 246; the first among the Methodists, 427.

Orton, the grandfather of Job, 211.

Oswestry, a conference at, between Conformists and Nonconformists, 206-209; the Academy at, 498.

Owen, Chancellor, a notorious persecutor, 372.

Owen, Charles, D.D., 294.

Owen, David, his horse taken, 170.

Owen, David, of Henllan, 294.

Owen, Hugh, of Bronycludwr, 281-285.

Owen, James, of Shrewsbury; his sufferings, 247-253; his life, 285-295.

Owen, Jeremiah, 294.

Owen, John, of Bronycludwr, 281, 285.

Owen, Dr. John, on the state of religion in Wales, 95.

P.

Palmer, Henry, Rhydyceisiaid, 261.

Panteg, origin of church at, 184.

Parliament, ordinances of, in reference to Wales, 62, 69, 74, 78, 80-83, 117.

Parliament, the Long, 62.

Parry, John, D.D., Bala, 480.

Parry, Dr. Richard, his corrected translation of the Bible the present standard, 19.

Parry, Thomas, 124.

Pelagianism among the Independents, the Presbyterians, and Antipædobaptists, 386-389.

Pembrokeshire, ministers ejected in, 150, 151; churches in, 264.

Pencader, the church at, 184.

Penmain, the church at, 510.

Penry, David, his conversion, 225.

Penry, John, on the morality of the Welsh clergy, 6-8; on the morality of the people, 11; his efforts to evangelize Wales, 20-23; his enemies persecuting him, 24; fleeing to Scotland, *ib.*; returns to London and joins the Separatists, 25; his

- imprisonment and death, *ib.* ; his character, 26-29.
- Perrot, Sir Herbert, 162.
- Perrot, Thomas, 272, 291.
- Persecutions, 155-172, 247-250, 369-381.
- Persecutor, a, drowned, 170.
- Petition by W. Cradock and others, 10; by John Penry, 21.
- Petition of South Wales, 77-80.
- Petworth, 294.
- Phillips, Daniel, his providential deliverance, 158; his life, 298.
- Phillips, Sir John, of Picton Castle, 314.
- Phillips, Peregrine, 150; his sufferings, 162; his life, 225-228.
- Phillips, Thomas, D.D., 501.
- Phillips, William, of Aberystroth, 260.
- Pioneer, the, of Welsh Nonconformity, 28.
- Places of worship, number of, in Wales, 464.
- Plundered by the King's party, 43.
- Poem, a, on the announcement of liberty, 177.
- Poems, the, of Vicar Prichard, 32.
- Pontypool College, 504.
- Popish, the, proceedings of the King, 62, 69, 74.
- Popkins, of Swansea, his Sandemanianism, 385.
- Population of Wales, 464.
- Potts, John, his cow, &c., taken, 170.
- Powell, Dr. David, of Ruabon, 5.
- Powell, John, A.M., 137.
- Powell, John, of Llangyndeyrn, 128.
- Powell, John, of Tredustan, 261.
- Powell, Richard, of Llanigon, 118.
- Powell, Rees, 127.
- Powell, Vavasor, his reply to the calumnies of Dr. Griffiths, 85; his narrative of the propagation of the Gospel in Wales, 85-90; his sufferings, 97-99; his life, 100-107.
- Preachers, itinerant, character of, 153; lay, number of, in Wales, 464.
- Preaching, the effects of Welsh, 392.
- Presbyterianism in Wales, 153.
- Press, the, Nonconformists availing themselves of the service of, 195.
- Price's, Catherine, remonstrance, 57.
- Price, Charles, of Cardigan, 125.
- Price, Christopher, of Llanfoist, 143.
- Price, David, of Llangynwr, 128.
- Price, David, of Maesyrnon, 265.
- Price, Isaac, Troedrihwdalar, 119.
- Price, Sir John, translating the Lord's Prayer, &c., 3; his life, 15.
- Price, Lewis, of Llangunllo, 126.
- Price, Rees, of Kildeudy, 263.
- Price, Samuel, of Bridgend, 188.
- Prichard, Dr. J., Llangollen, 485.
- Prichard, Rees, his character of the Welsh clergy, 8; on the immorality of the people, 12; his remarkable conversion, 29; becomes chaplain of the Earl of Essex, 30; charges preferred against him in the spiritual courts, 31; his bequest to a charitable school appropriated by a bishop, 32; the celebrity of his poems, and his character, 32, 33.
- Prichard, William John, the first minister of Llanwenarth, 143.
- Richard, William, of Clwchdyrnog, his life and sufferings, 395-401.
- Primitive Methodists, 452, 463.
- Primrose, Mr., 151.
- Princes Risborough, 294.
- Prisons, the, overcrowded with Nonconformists, 97.
- Probert, David William, 123.
- Prosser, Walter, 142.
- Protector, the Lord, Vavasor Powell against, and Walter Cradock for, 96.
- Protheroe, Rice, 192, 263.
- Proud, Thomas, 91, 135.
- Prytherch, Rees, of Ystradwalter, 128; his life, 285-287.
- Prys, Edmund, 18.
- Pugh, Hugh, of Monmouthshire, 146.
- Pugh, John, of Henllan, 261.
- Pugh, Phillip, of Cilgwyn; his life, 309, 310.
- Q.
- Quakers, rise of the, in Wales, 93; the character of the founders of, 94, 95; six hundred of their cattle seized, 97; their sufferings, 155-158; abused and fined, 168-171; their numerical strength in Wales, 463; their character and efforts in the cause of religious liberty, 464.
- Quarrell, James, 145.
- Quarrell, Paul, 145.
- Quarrell, Thomas, 145.
- "Queries," by Samuel Jones, Brynllwarch, 232-235.
- R.
- Radnorshire, Ministers ejected in, 151, 152; churches in, 264, 265.
- Ramoth, Jones of, advocating Sandemanism, 388.
- Ravens, Nathaniel, 144.
- Rees, David, of Llanelly, 472.
- Rees, David, of Llanfynydd, 427.

Rees, David, of London, 271.
 Rees, Henry, of Liverpool, 468.
 Rees, John, of Newport, 427.
 Rees, Lewis, of Mynyddbach, 412-417.
 Rees, Morgan John, his efforts in establishing schools, 394.
 Rees, Rice, B.D., 33.
 Reformation, the progress of, under Edward VI., 2.
 Reminiscences of old ministers, 438.
 Re-ordination, queries about, 234.
 Religion, state of, in Wales, in 1742, 359.
 Religious liberty secured by Act of Parliament, 246.
 Republicans, the, 93.
 Revivals, 389-393; 429-431; misrepresented, 389.
 Rhosymeirch, the first Dissenting church in Anglesea, 401.
 Rhydwlilim, a close communion church, 237.
 Rhydderch, John, committed to prison, 171.
 Richard, Ebenezer, his life, 444-446.
 Richard, Henry, 446.
 Richards, Dr. William, propagates Pelagianism in Wales, 389.
 Roberts, John, of Llanbrynmair, 431.
 Roberts, Jonathan, of Llanvair, 133.
 Roberts, William, of Brecon, 500.
 Robins, Mr., of Llangattock, 141.
 Robinson, George, 140.
 Rogers, Hopkin, 141.
 Rogers, Hugh, 144.
 Rowlands, Daniel, of Llangeitho, 349-384.
 Rowlands, David, B.A., Brecon, 500.
 Rowlands, Ellis, of Ruthin, 133.
 Royalists, character of, 64-66.

S.

Sabelianism, Peter Williams accused of, 385.
 Sailor, a stern, overcome, 438.
 Salary, a minister's, 447.
 Salesbury, William, translating the Psalms and Epistles, 3; the New Testament, 14; his life, 15, 16.
 Samuel, Christmas, 310.
 Sandemanianism among the Methodists, 385; among the Antipædobaptists, 388.
 Saye and Sele, Lord, 57.
 Schism, the sin of, 428.
 School, the Classical, of Llwynrhydown, 442.
 Schools, The Welsh Circulating, 316-318; Dr. Daniel Williams's Charity,

296-298; Dr. Edward Williams's, 393, 394.
 Scougal's "Life of God in the Soul," 443.
 Scriptures, Editions of, in the Welsh language, 509.
 Seal, George, 138.
 Sermon, the effect of, at Pont Ripont, 403.
 Sermons on Baptism, 251.
 Seward, William, murdered at Hay, 371.
 Shrewsbury, Academy at, 291.
 Simms, Mr., 142.
 Sin, mortal, against the prelates, 23.
 Six things to be remembered, 42.
 Sketty, 435.
 Skippon, Major, 45.
 Society, the Bible, its origin, 424.
 Society, a, charged with insubordination, 428.
 Society, the, for Promoting the Establishment of English Churches in South Wales, &c., 459.
 Society, the London Missionary, 423.
 Society Meetings, origin of, 369.
 Society, a, superstitious, 427.
 Some, Dr., of Cambridge, 23.
 South's, Dr., letter to S. Jones, 240.
 Southwark, a Welsh church gathered in, 436.
 Spurs, silver, worn by a minister, 302.
 State of religion in Wales, 359.
 Statistics, the, of the Welsh Nonconforming churches, 259-265, 359-362, 389, 450-452, 461-464.
 Steel, Richard, 134.

Sufferings, the, of Nonconformists (see Persecution).
 Sunday schools, 393-395, 446; scholars in at present, 464.
 Supper, the Lord's, administered without canonical qualifications, 424.
 Swaine, Richard, 152.
 Swansea, Ambrose Mostyn gathering a church at, 61; the Independent church at, converted into an Arian or a Unitarian congregation, 435.
 Swansea in America, 115.
 Swiney, James Owen settling at, 290.
 Symonds, Richard, his life, 54-56.

T.

Taylor, Richard, 132.
 Taylor, Thomas, itinerating in the Principality, 418.
 "Telyn Dewi," 443.
 Terril, Edward, 181.

Testament, the New, letter of Dr. Davies prefixed to, 11.
 Thomas, Howell, 135.
 Thomas, Hugh, his child unburied, 9.
 Thomas, Joshua, the historian, 410-412.
 Thomas, Lewis, 140.
 Thomas, Morgan, 151.
 Thomas, Robert, of Baglan, 139.
 Thomas, Robert, of Bangor, 502.
 Thomas, Robert, of Hanover, 501.
 Thomas, Roderick, 126.
 Thomas, Thomas, of Peckham, 395.
 Thomas, Thomas, D.D., Pontypool, 488.
 Thomas, Timothy, 149.
 Thomas, Timothy, of Aberduar, 395.
 Thomas, Titus, 149.
 Thomas, William, of Llantrissant, 128.
 Thomas, William, of Swansea, 137.
 Thompson's, Josiah, statistics of Non-conformity, 389.
 Tibbot, Richard, 363.
 Times, the, contemplation on, 9.
 Tillotson's funeral sermon of Gouge, 200.
 Tombes, John, of Leominster, 93.
 Tongue, British, how to pronounce the letters of, 16.
 Treasure, a, to the Welsh, 197.
 Trefecca, H. Harries's religious establishment at, 383; colleges at, 501, 506.
 Trefgarn, the church at, 192.
 Trewen, 193.
 Twrgwyn, David Morris removing to, 403.

U.

Unconverted, Baxter's Call to the, 177.
 Uniformity, Act of, 122.
 Union, the Congregational, of Wales, 458.
 Union, the Welsh Baptist, its formation, 457.
 Unitarians, the, in Wales, 463.

V.

Vaughan, Henry, 92.
 Vaughan, Howell, 92.
 Vaughan, R., Bishop of London, 18.
 Vindication, a, of itinerants, 85.
 Violin, a, cast away, 38.

W.

Waddington's, Dr., life of Penry, 29.
 Walker, Fowler, of Abergavenny, 271.
 Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy," 75, 76.

Walters, David, 116.
 Walters, Henry, commissioned to preach in Wales, 58, 59.
 War, civil, 63-65; second ditto, 72.
 Watford, the first Association of the Methodists at, 362; the church at, 362, 363.
 Watkins, Thomas, 118.
 Watkins, Thomas, 124.
 Weakest, the, Christians falling into the water, 40.
 Weaver, John, 151.
 Welsh periodicals, efforts to establish, 418.
 Wesleys, the, in Wales, 418.
 Wesleyanism, its rise and progress in Wales, 419-423; numerical strength of, 463.
 Wharton, Lord, assisting in publishing the Welsh Bible, 250.
 Whitecross, the church at, 363.
 Whitgift, Archbishop, 20.
 Wilbraham, Lady, of Weston, 295.
 Wilks, Matthew, in Swansea, 424.
 Will, the, of Dr. Williams, 296-298.
 Williams, Archbishop, 70.
 Williams, Captain, 150.
 Williams, Charles, 141.
 Williams, David, of Watford, 363.
 Williams, David, Troedrhwdalar, 119, 482.
 Williams's Elegy on the death of H. Harries, 219.
 Williams, Evan, his sufferings, 373-377.
 Williams, Daniel, D.D., settling in Ireland, 295; returning to London: his bequests, 296, 298.
 Williams, Edward, D.D., 393.
 Williams, Henry, of Ysgafell, 144; his house burnt, and his father murdered, &c., 159; God's blessing upon his field, and the tragic end of some of his persecutors, 160.
 Williams, Henry, of Britton Ferry, 135.
 Williams, Henry, Llantrissant, 136.
 Williams, John, of Caernarvonshire, 129.
 Williams, John, of Llangollen, 150.
 Williams, Mr., of Llanvapley, 141.
 Williams, Moses, his edition of the Welsh Bible, 311.
 Williams, Peter, expelled from the Methodists, 386; his life, 408-410.
 Williams, Rice, of Newport, 143.
 Williams, William, of Pantycelyn, 353, 354.
 Williams, William, of Wern, remarkable effects of his preaching, 393.

- Willey, Elizabeth, fined, 169.
 "Winding Sheet, the, for Mr.
 Baxter's Dead," 45.
 Winter, Charles, his Arminianism,
 273.
 Works, religious, by Nonconformists,
 433.
 Wrexham, origin of the church at,
 185 ; division in the church at, 256 ;
 a chapel demolished at, 267 ; Aca-
 demy at, 498.
- Wroth, William, his life and cha-
 racter, 37-42.
 Wynn, Sir John, 18.
 Wynne, John, of Newmarket, 186.
- Y.
- Yates, Dr., 5.
 Yeaman, Mr., of Bristol, 39.
 Young, Stephen, 151.

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